

Hillandale News



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No. 228, Winter 1999/2000

Mechanical Music

Wednesday 9th February 2000

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Hillandale News

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**Issue No. 228 – Winter
1999/2000**

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CONTENTS

- 423 **Chairman's Chat**
- 424 **London Meetings: 2000 Programme**
- 425 **Midlands Group: 2000 Programme**
- 426 **The Edison Bell Home Recorder;**
from H. P. Bailey and the late J. J.
Hopkinson
- 430 **The Good Companions: the 101 and**
Other Compact HMV Portables,
Part 3; by Dave Cooper
- 435 **If You Were the Only Pearl in the**
World; by Christopher Proudfoot
- 438 **Arnold Sugden – Pioneer**
Extraordinary; by Reg Williamson
- 443 **Cal Stewart and the British 'Negro**
Laughing Song'; by Tim Brooks
- 445 **We Also Have Our Own Records,**
Part 12: 'The Daily Herald' to
'A. C. Delacour de Brisay'; by
Frank Andrews
- 455 **Wyper's 'Empress' Records – A**
Case Study of an Early Cottage
Industry Cylinder Producer; by
Keith Chandler
- 460 **Book Review**
- 462 **The Audio-Visual Archivists'**
Chronology; from IASA
- 464 **Report of the International**
Association of Sound and Audio-
Visual Archives meeting in Vienna,
18th-25th September 1999
- 465 **Reports**
- 469 **Regional Group Secretaries**
- 470 **Letters**
- 475 **News from the CLPGS Bookshop**
- 477 **Small Advertisements**
- Inside** **Calendar of Forthcoming Events**
- Rear**
- Cover**

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EDITORS' DESK

The Society's Annual General Meeting took place only a few days before the Autumn issue of the magazine was distributed, so unfortunately, the decisions taken there could not conveniently be passed on to the wider Membership until now. The Meeting heard from our Chairman that the Treasurership had now been transferred to Michael Smith, not without some difficulty, and that current banking arrangements had been revised, the better to suit our needs.

The CLPGS Bookshop, under the very able, but long-suffering custody of George Woolford, has now been established on a semi-autonomous basis, which will enable George to manage Bookshop affairs without constant recourse to Directors for approval. We hope this will make his task less onerous.

Honoraria were agreed for both George Woolford and Edward Parker, to reflect both the workload involved in their respective tasks, and the contribution their efforts make to Society finances.

Changes in Directorships were agreed – Howard Martin, Miles Mallinson and Tom Little were elected as new Directors, whilst, reluctantly, the resignation of George Frow was accepted. George remains as a Patron of the Society, and his incomparable and unstinting service to the Society over many years was acknowledged by those present.

Discussion on the Society's archives took place, in particular, what they comprised, and whether a Society Archivist should be elected. It was agreed that the first task was to establish an Inventory – to that end, our Chairman has asked that any Member currently holding any Society Archive material or artefacts, write to him to record

the fact, with the details of what their holding comprises.

The rôle of the Society as a charity was also discussed, and the responsibility the Society has to support work, such as research into recorded sound history. Should the Society receive an application for charitable financial support from someone wishing to undertake such work, the Society would give consideration to providing such support.

.....
The Editors have received a complimentary copy of THE RECORD NEWS, the journal of the Society of Indian Record Collectors. This is published in Bombay (more correctly, Mumbai) annually. The society has been established since 1990, for the preservation and promotion of Indian sound recordings. Annual overseas membership is Rs.1200 (US\$30), and life membership ten times those amounts.

The magazine weighs in at 110 pages of A4, and includes, amongst other items, two feature articles – one on the female singer, Bai Sundrabai, of Pune (c.1885-1955), complete with discography of about 100 78 rpm records, by Suresh Chandvankar – the other, by Mr. Amitabha Ghosh, on The Pre-Commercial Era of Wax Cylinder Recordings in India. The journal, which is written in English, and lavishly illustrated, albeit in monochrome, is of considerable value to those whose breadth of interest extends beyond Western culture.

The contact address is The Society of Indian Record Collectors, c/o Suresh Chandvankar, Hon. Secretary, [REDACTED]

MUMBAI, 400 005, INDIA.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in HILLANDALE NEWS must reach the Editorial Group not less than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue**. Hence, the deadline for the Spring 2000 issue will be the 19th February 2000. Copyright on all articles in HILLANDALE NEWS remains the property of the authors. Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Group.

Chairman's Chat

When people bring me items to look at in my shop, I often have to try hard to sound both enthusiastic and regretful at the same time. All collectors with any sensitivity have 'been there', too. A well-meaning member of the public shows you yet another pile of Bing or Gracie records and informs you how popular those singers were in his or her day. Luckily, that is my cue to reply that for that very reason the records sold tens of thousands of copies and are still so commonplace today as to be virtually valueless. This is often a hard concept to put over to old people, who naturally expect the good to be rewarded with value by right. We have all heard the next question, too: 'What is valuable, then? I'll go back and see if I've got it!' For this question, too, I have a polite rehearsed answer, but can I really patronise the speaker by telling them that I very much doubt that what they have at home is any more desirable than what I have already seen, even if I haven't viewed it? And how can one sum up the desirability of records in less than a short lecture? My favourite request is, 'Tell me the numbers of the good ones, and I'll go home and check for them!'

All this brings me to my point. I have often reflected on the irony of the fact that there are only two basic reasons why collectors' items in any field are valuable today. One is sheer antiquity, which we all understand: things dating from such an early period that few were rich or privileged enough to have owned them, resulting in very few survivals

from a small initial output. The other category is stranger, and contains those items so poorly conceived or constructed as to have attracted few, if any takers at the time: in other words, deserved commercial failures. They sold badly for good reason to the fools of the past, and few could see the point in hoarding these costly mistakes for generations. So we must tell the public that the rubbish of yesteryear is more valuable than the rugged and dependable. Edison Standard? OK, but bring me an Echophone with paper bellows and glass sound arm, or Flamephone with original gas jets and I'll get my cheque-book out double quick.

Everyone knows what a horn gramophone looks like. Few go to the tip without being recognised and wanted by another would-be owner. However, I wonder how many tinfoil phonographs went to the scrap man without a second glance? A genuine Edison example recently passed through a south coast saleroom for a reported £80 without even the auctioneer suspecting the treasure that he had consigned to a box on the floor. I am quite convinced that plenty more genuinely rare items are still 'out there' quite unrecognised for what they actually are after nearly a century of obscurity. If you feel that 'good things' have all dried up, take heart, there are still wonderful things 'out there'. All you have to do is find them!

Howard Hope

London Meetings - 2000 Programme

DATE	PRESENTER	PRESENTS	VENUE
January 18th	Alan Palmer	'Once a Jolly Swagman' (Peter Dawson)	Swedenborg Hall
February 15th	Peter Martland, supported by Frank Andrews	Zonophone: The Peoples' Record	Swedenborg Hall
March 21st	Bernard Smith (Member of the Lewisham Recorded Music Society)	'Real Opera' Recordings of live performances, 1926-1955	Swedenborg Hall
April 18th	Barry Raynaud	Members' Quiz Night	Swedenborg Hall
May 16th	John Passmore	'Deep Down (Groaning & Moaning) A Celebration of John's three score years and ten	Swedenborg Hall
June 20th	Dominic Combe	'The Grand Tour' of Europe	Swedenborg Hall
July 18th	Members & Visitors	'Hen's Teeth Are Something to Crow About' Members & Visitors present rare and exotic items associated with recorded sound - (opportunity to sell or swap?)	Swedenborg Hall
August 15th	Chris Hamilton	'A Third Taste of Scotland'	Swedenborg Hall
September 19th	Frank Andrews	'We Have Our Own Records'	Swedenborg Hall
October 17th	John Cowley	'London Is the Place For Me'	Swedenborg Hall
November 21st	John Passmore	Ladies of a Golden Age	Swedenborg Hall
December 19th	Members & Visitors	Traditional Members' Night - Present your own records on the theme of 'One for the Record' - Who or what would you carry into the new Millenium and why.	Swedenborg Hall
January 16 th , 2001	Bernard Smith (Member of the Lewisham Recorded Music Society)	'Singers of the Century' Perhaps not the best, but certainly unique.	Swedenborg Hall

Midlands Group – 2000 Programme

DATE	EVENT & PRESENTER	SUBJECT
Saturday, 15th January	Annual General Meeting followed by - BYFR (Bring Your Favourite Record)	Members present their own choice of records
Saturday, 18th March	Richard Taylor John Stroud	The 5-inch Zonophones Comedy on Record
Saturday, 20th May	John Dales	John Dales' Cylinder Selection
Sunday, 11th June	Joint Midlands & Northern Groups Meeting, Compton Grange, Wolverhampton <i>Presenters to be announced</i>	<i>To be announced</i>
Saturday, 15th July	Mick James Geoff Howl	Glenn Miller Recordings British Dance Bands
Saturday, 16th September	Eddie Dunn Peter Dempsey	Opera on Cylinder Gems of Music Hall
Saturday, 23rd September	Midlands Group Phonofair, St. Matthews Church Hall, Willenhall Road, Wolverhampton	
Saturday, 18th November	Ladies' Night	Personal Choice
Saturday, 20th January, 2001	Annual General Meeting followed by – BYFR (Bring Your Favourite Record)	Members present their own choice of records

Except where stated, the venue for these meetings will be in Birmingham. The normal venue is the Grimshaw Room, at St. Chad's R. C. Cathedral, Shadwell Street, Birmingham. Temporary use of the neighbouring Salvation Army Building may continue into early 2000. Contact the Midlands Group Secretary, Phil Bennett (on [REDACTED]) for the latest information. These meetings start at 7.00 p.m. for 7.30.

The Edison Bell Home Recorder

from H. P. Bailey, and the late J. J. Hopkinson

Our Member, H. P. Bailey, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, sent us some photographs of the Edison Bell Home Recorder he bought at an auction. It had been part of the collection of J. J. Hopkinson, being sold off after his death. An interesting thing about the device is that the box is clearly marked

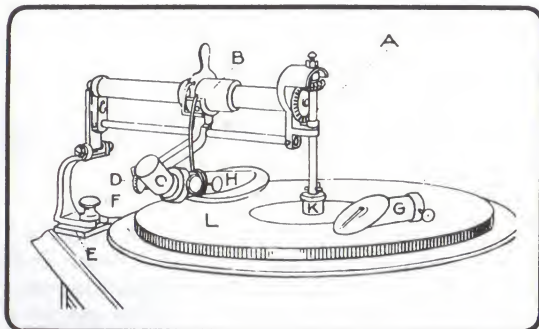
Edison Bell, but the item is engraved Neophone. Mr Bailey told us that Mr. Hopkinson had described finding this item in an early HILLANDALE NEWS. We thought you would like to hear the story again, so from the pages of HILLANDALE NEWS, no. 59, February 1971 ...



No. 59.

Feb 1971

Edison Bell "EUREKA"
APPLIANCE for
MAKING YOUR OWN DISC RECORDS AT HOME.



Edison Bell, Edisionia Works, Glengall Road, London, S.E.

(See Article by J.J.Hopkinson on page 198)

The Edison Bell Home Recorder

by J. J. Hopkinson

The other day I picked up a most interesting gadget (complete in a box) and named the EUREKA Edison Bell Home Recorder, J. F. Hough, Ltd., Proprs.

Essentially, it is a mechanism for attaching to a disc gramophone to record on wax discs. It is screwed on to the top of the gramophone, and it hinges away when not in use while ordinary records are being played. It consists of a screw pitched at 32 threads per inch on which a nut and carrier traverses, being identical with the phonographic arrangement. On the carrier is attached a horn and reproducer or recorder. The power is transmitted from a special bush attached to the centre-pin of the turntable and a shaft then engages with it. This shaft terminates in a bevel gear driving the screw. As the turntable rotates, the screw turns and the carriage moves radially across the turntable.

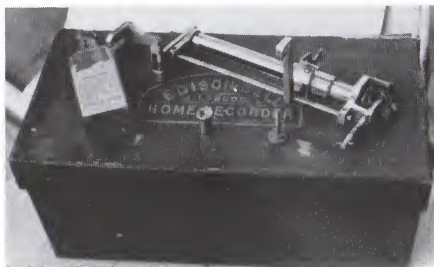


Figure 1. The Home Recorder attachment, and its box.

The pitch of the screw then, is 32 t.p.i., and the bevel gears have 36 and 24

teeth, and if my maths are correct, the pitch of the record should be –

$$32 \times \frac{36}{24} = 48 \text{ grooves per inch.}$$

The '36' gear is attached to the screw, and the '24' gear to the vertical rod from the turntable, and they engage at a right-angle.

Unfortunately there are no records, but pictures and a description suggests a 10-inch wax record is used, which is confirmed by the 5 in. traverse on the carriage.

Recently I have seen another system where the power is transmitted by means of using a metal disc with grooves, which is inserted in the centre of the wax disc, and a stylus traverses this and takes with it the carriage through a linkage. This method means one has less recording surface, because this is taken up by the metal disc, whereas the method described above gives one a normal-sized record, and it works on the same principle as a phonograph recording, and not like a gramophone.

Having recorded, the recording head is exchanged for a reproducing head, and plays back. To remove the recording, one moistens a cloth with a special fluid called 'SOLVENE', and this is wiped along the lines of the record, when the indentations will disappear. The instructions state that the recording can be played several hundred times, and a permanent record may be prepared by Edison Bell at a moderate cost.

The circumstances in which I acquired my 'EUREKA' are interesting. I have a friend who really has a 'big heart', but assumes everyone is a crook unless otherwise proved. One day I took him to a junk dealer, and they didn't hit it off at all well, there being a mutual distrust – since that day two years ago

I have never taken him again, but have visited the dealer every three weeks or so, asking if he had any phonographs or mechanical gadgets. I have always made a point of being brief. The dealer on the other hand, has been obliging but guarded, thinking no doubt I was tarred with the same brush as my friend!

After two years of mutual tolerance and suspicion – I broke the ice! I entered the shop, and with a jovial smile (never attempted before) bounced out “I see you have a very good taste in caravettes – I have the same model as yours outside, which is parked next to your new one.” “Really”, he beamed, “Well, let’s have a look. I can’t understand how the windows on mine work, and where is your water-pump installed ...?” We had a whale of a time, and after thirty minutes he said, “By the way, do you want to look in the shop?” Usually I felt he wanted me out, not in his shop, and so we went in, arm in arm, like brothers. “I have one broken phonograph”, he said, “but come upstairs, I have some better stuff there”. (Up to this day the place might have been a bungalow as far as I was concerned.) Up we went and the place was full of gadgets. “Do you want an empty box for a Symphonium, with ormolu handles, for a quid?” ... “Please, that’s fine”, I said, “and what’s in that box over there?” This was it – HOME RECORDER EDISON BELL – “Oh, it’s something I picked up, don’t really want to sell – well – you can have it for a couple of quid”.

I pulled the shining mechanism out, it looked new, and the cog teeth were fair grinning at me, but I was stumped. “If only I had some literature about it”. “There is a pamphlet in the box here”, he said (he was holding the box), and he handed it to me. There was a

picture of the mechanism installed on a gramophone, the name was given, and its price 2 guineas and blank discs at 2s. each. “Grand, I see how it works, but I wonder if it’s complete, I suppose I’ll never know”. He dug his hand into the box again, said “here” – and I unfolded another pamphlet, and this had a detailed description of the way it worked, and also a complete list of the original box contents – everything I wanted to know – what a find! In my ecstasy, I was getting quite light-headed and began to giggle, and with a silly laugh, said, “on the list there’s a piece of lint for wiping the records, I suppose that’s missing!” His hand dug again – “er, it’s here” he said, and waved it on high like a flag. “I wish I knew how old it was”, I said. Another dig – “There’s a bill for it. he said. I gaped in amazement, and read –

To Mrs. Robinson,
1 EUREKA Outfit,
4 Extra Blanks,

1 Piece of Lint for Cleaning.

The bill-head said “EDISONIA Ltd., Euston Buildings, N.W.” which had been run through with a pen and “J. F. Hough, Ltd.” written in ink underneath it. It was signed “E.A.”, dated 24th November 1910.

My knees went weak, and I slumped down on what felt like a heap of Model C & H reproducers; - “it’s sixty years old”. A minute passed in heavy breathing, then I took a grip on myself and continued to read the list of contents. With a touch of sarcasm I said “Where’s the SOLVENE fluid for removing the recording?” He dug again

and handed me over a small bottle, and with genuine apology all over his honest face, he said “I’m sorry, but there’s only half the bottle left!”

Editor's Note - The Neophone Home Recording Attachment had been advertised in TALKING MACHINE NEWS in January 1906 (see below).

Subsequently, J. Hough, Ltd. announced the EUREKA Home Recording Outfit for 'shortly' in the same journal in May 1910.

436

THE TALKING MACHINE NEWS.

JANUARY 1906

The Neophone DISC - Phonograph

(System Dr. MICHAELIS).

Patented in U.K., France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy, Canada, India, Australia, etc.

Neophones,

From 30/- to £10 10/-

Neophone Discs :

9-inch, 6d. each. 12-inch, 1/- each.

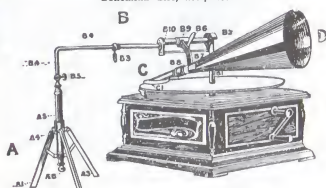
Neophone Grand Opera Discs :

9-inch, 1/- each. 12-inch, 2/- each.

20in. DISCS, 10/6 each.

Playing from 8 to 10 Minutes.

Complete Overtures on each Disc. Post and Peasant, Bohemian Girl, Etc., Etc.



THE NEOPHONE

Home-Recording Attachment,

Price 30/- complete, with Six 9-in. Blanks.

This apparatus removes the last bar to the universal popularity of the Disc machine. With the help of this simple but very effective device, Disc Records can now be made at home with surprising success.

NEOPHONE ATTACHMENTS

15/- each.

Neophone Discs can be played on any Disc Machine by the help of this Attachment.



Neophone Model V.—£5 10s.

PERMANENT SAPPHIRE REPRODUCER

NO NEEDLES TO CHANGE.

Unbreakable Discs, unsurpassed in Purity and Fullness of Tone.

CHEAPER THAN CYLINDERS.

DEALERS! You might as well make money early in the season.

WHILE YOU WAIT

You turn coin away.

NEOPHONE LIMITED

(1905),

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE.

PARIS.

BERLIN.

MILAN.

Telegraphic Address: "DISCOPHONE, LONDON."

Telephone: No. 258, WALL.



Figures 2a and 2b. Two views of the Home Recording Attachment casting, showing (a) the 'Neophone' engraving, and (b) the 'Dr. Michaelis' engraving.



THE GOOD COMPANIONS

The 101 and Other Compact HMV Portables – part 3

By Dave Cooper

Further Acknowledgment

Thanks are due to Neil Gerty for allowing me to examine a large number of HMV portable machines in his collection over the past couple of years.

Miscellany

Before moving onto other models, a few further comments on the 101. It should be pointed out that the appearance of the blue crocodile 101 material differed between the inside and the outside of the case. On the outside, the veins of the material were clearly seen. On the inside, the material seems darker as the veins in the material are filled with colour.

In addition to other accessories you could buy, HMV produced a brown speckled cover made of canvas to protect your portable gramophones, 101 and 102. It is not known how long they were available for, or, at the time of writing, what the price of these were. The canvas covers are held together by brown press-studs, and can be left on the machine while it is playing.

There are no HMV or gramophone company markings to identify it as a genuine article. I bought a 102 complete with a cover thinking that the previous owner must have had it specially made. It was only when I discussed this with Christopher Proudfoot that he confirmed it as an HMV accessory.

In Part 2 of this series, I referred to a single winding handle guiding plate (see Figure 8 on p.384). A further variation of this component (omitted from the text) was also used, as shown here.

Fig. 17
Two Plates Create a Guide for the Winding Handle (although on some machines, this is in the form of one complete component).



The HMV 112

The 112 was really a 101 with the no. 32 vertical double-spring motor, instead of one of the new-style horizontal single-spring motors. The case was much deeper than the Model 101 to house the larger motor. As such, it was not an ideal portable machine, resembling a standard table gramophone in both size and weight. Unlike most table machines, it could only be played with the lid open, and it had a carrying handle!

This machine appears to have been available between 1927 and 1928, and an example in the Royal Scottish Museum is dateable to that period. It is made in teak (as a 'Tropical' model) and has the recently introduced circular gold transfer identifying the model number. The gold transfer is rather badly placed next to the brake lever, and can get worn

away. The machine comes with either nickel-plated or gilt fittings. The protective metal corners are present. The lid resembles the 'Tropical' 101, but as with other tropical machines, had no ferrule in the record compartment. In all other respects, it appears similar to a teak 101.

The HMV 102.



Figure 1. The Model 102.

The Model 102 replaced the 101. One would expect that the stocks of 101s would be running down, at least by the advertisement of Christmas 1931 (Figure 2.) Its new-style case with rounded corners was initially available in the colour range of the last 101s. The colour range was reduced, subsequently, and certainly by 1937 (possibly as early as 1934) 102s in brown or grey leathercloth, and red leathercloth (with gilt fittings) were no longer available. Black, green, red and blue were offered until the end of production in 1960. The last red leathercloth machines were a very bright colour with a matching felt turntable mat. (The red turntable mat

had previously been a darker colour than the case.) The original prices of the 102s were the same as the last 101s –

- ◇ Black £5 12s 6d
- ◇ Blue, Brown, Green, Red or Grey £6 0s 0d
- ◇ Red Leather £8 8s 0d.

The first 102s were supplied with a record tray to hold 14 records. It sat on the turntable surrounded by two 'prongs' protruding from the motor board. The tray had projecting lugs, which engaged on the prongs to stop it rotating when the machine was being transported. The tray was lined with felt matching the turntable mat. Both the tray and the prongs were withdrawn by version 102C of 1936.

The fittings were chrome-plated. Pre-war coloured machines did not have protective metal corners, although black machines did have blackened metal protective plates over the rounded corners. The lid had a new stay which would hold in place whether fully opened or not, thanks to a sprung catch, this time on the left of the lid. The tone arm was a larger bore than on the 101, and with a new metal-fronted soundbox, the no. 16. This was replaced, first by the no. 5a, and then the 5b.

The one-piece motor-board (made of metal on early models) incorporated the internal horn, moulded beneath, wrapped around the new motor. The winding handle was a new design, which slipped into the motor to engage, rather than threaded, as on the 100 and 101 models.

The 102 inherited the basic principles of the 101, and some of the fittings – the Tungstyle tin clip, winding handle clips,

*This Christmas
give*

**"THE
GOOD
COMPANION"**



*. . . it carries the FINEST ENTERTAINMENT
round the house—or round the world*

NO gift can give so much pleasure in so many places as the "His Master's Voice" Portable. It has always been recognised as the one portable gramophone designed, first and foremost, to be a supreme musical instrument. And now there is a new model incorporating many improvements—without any increase in price.



Everything is new . . . cabinet, all-metal soundbox, detachable metal tray for 14 records. "Slip-in" winding handle. Automatic brake that works on any record. One-hand lid stay. Chromium plating.

THE NEW

"His Master's Voice"
PORTABLE

Figure 2. Advertisement for the Model 102 for Christmas 1931.

manual brake and speed indicator plate. (On early 102s, the manual brake was not fitted. Instead, the machine had a Universal automatic brake, which stopped – with a bit of luck! – whether a record had a run-out groove or not.

Another automatic brake was used later that was less complicated, and could be turned on or off by means of a lever, without disengaging it from the base of the tone arm.

The corner needle drawer is similar to the 101, but later 102s had early matching coloured ‘plastic’ drawers. Early coloured versions had chrome needle drawers.

Usually, 102s have an ivory identification plate showing the model number. 102 model lettering starts at 102C. The versions ran from A to H, but the letters used did not include F or G.

Model	HMV 102
Date of Production	Late 1931 to 1960 (it may be that 102s were available only from remaining stock by 1960).
Colours available	As for 101G (early) until possibly 1934, or as late as 1937, after which, only black, green, blue, and red leathercloth were available. Some special coloured versions appeared during World War II. The Indian 102s were painted in various colours and designs.
Soundbox	No 16; 5a (102A – Bs); 5b (102C onwards)
Motor	The 270 series
Escutcheon	Style 7 (until model 102E, when escutcheons were no longer present)
Catch/Lock	Similar to Style 5 (A – C). New, single-action type on D – H.
Fittings	Chrome-plated (later needle drawers in coloured ‘plastic’, blackened metal on black machines)
Identifying Plate	Third style on early machines, usually; Fourth style ivory from 102C
Winding Handle	Style 4
Carrying Handle	Usually as the 101D (Pakawa), with some variations during World War II
Other Comments	Black machines had wood-grained or wood motor-boards until 102H. On 102E and H, the lids on the case were deeper; all motor-boards were covered in leathercloth, and coloured machines had chromium corner fittings. Carrying handles varied especially during the 1940s, which may have been due to wartime shortages.

I expect that there are many variations on 102s, just as are found in the 101s. I have found on raising the turntable of 102s with no. 16 soundboxes that the motor-boards are cut away, revealing most of the motor and the complicated

brake assembly. The motor-board reverts to the usual drilled hole type later, but I have also seen machines with 5a soundboxes and cut-away motor-boards. 5a machines also sometimes have a variation to the Tungstyle clip (the 4th style), as illustrated.



Figure 3. The Tungstyle Needle Tin Clip, Style 4.

The 5b soundbox is present on several of the 102Cs I have examined, and therefore may have been introduced from that version. The legend 'Made in Gt. Britain' and the trade mark transfer with brighter green background can be found on some 102Ds and on the versions that followed.

The HMV trade mark is attached to a plinth on the inside of the 102s' lid, but the plinth is not present, I suspect, from the 102E. This may also be the time when a flush motor-board was introduced, leaving no room for an escutcheon.

Whilst on holiday in Norfolk in the summer of 1999, I found an Electrola '102', which I was informed was brought into the country by a Jewish boy fleeing the Nazis. The metal identifying plate gave it the model number 'modell C106'. The machine was black (as you might expect with the prefix letter C) with the serial number

thus: APP NR 7795. An ivory plate warned '*Achtung! Vor Wiederaufsetzen des platten-tellers automatische Bremse auf Aus stellen.*' No letter appears after the model number, but the example matches early 102s with studs and record tray. The example I saw had studs but the tray was missing.

In addition to the legitimate versions of portable HMV machines for sale in other countries, there also exist examples of machines of dubious origin. A friend of mine showed me an almost exact copy of a 102. It had no HMV trademark of course and originated from Russia!

HMV 114

This was really a 102 with a double spring motor. Many of the comments made about the model 112 and its relationship to the 101 apply to the 114. It is known that the 114 was available in brown leathercloth, and it may have been available in other colours as well. The 114 was available for only a short time, and not after 1934.

to be continued ...

And for music wherever you go—
THE WORLD-FAMOUS PORTABLE

THIS wonderful little instrument, one of the most popular ever produced by The Gramophone Company, has made a name for itself all over the world. Its "true-to-life" tone is unapproached by any other instrument of its size and scope. This instrument is extremely light and easy to carry, and all metal fittings are chromium plated. Equipped with No. 16 all-metal soundbox, universal automatic brake, and one carrying tray to hold fourteen 10-inch records. Slip-in winding handle. In black, blue, green, red, brown or grey, and (de luxe model) in red leather.

Model 102

If You Were the Only Pearl in the World ...

by Christopher Proudfoot

Many years ago, my fascination with minor variations and with anything Gramophone Company led me to acquire a rather dilapidated hornless model of about 1910, called 'The Pearl'. I recall our present Chairman, on seeing this runt in my collection, asking if, in all my years of collecting, I had not found a better Cinch? 'Ah', I was able to reply, crushingly, 'it's not a Cinch'.

For those unfamiliar with the model under either name, it was a bargain basement Zonophone with a metal grille (behind doors) in front of the motor-filled horn and a Zonophone (Exhibition Junior pattern) soundbox on a straight, unjointed tone arm. Uniquely among British market HMV and Zonophone models, it was identified by an enamel plaque on the motor-board. Later versions have wooden louvres in place of the metal grille.



Figure 1. The enamel 'Cinch' plaque.

The Pearl is identified by one of those circular gold transfers on the side, found only on HMV models of the 1910/11 season. On the opposite side is a Nipper trade mark, similar to that used on many of the smaller models of the 1912-1922 period, but small and possibly unique to this model.



Figure 2. The rather indistinct 'The Pearl Gramophone' transfer.



Figure 3. The miniature 'Nipper' transfer.

What puzzled me about the Pearl was the absence of any reference to it, so far as I could find, in any UK catalogue of the period. For a long time, I speculated that it might be an export model, and

felt gratified when another example, of French origin, came my way. This differed in two respects: it was in a carrying case (obviously of French origin), which had preserved the machine in showroom condition, and it had no 'Pearl' transfer. It did, however, have the same miniature Nipper, the same Exhibition Junior soundbox, and the same Angel trade mark stamped on the rear bend of the tone arm

A recent opportunity to skim some overseas HMV catalogues at once confirmed and confused the picture. In Hungary, for example, this model appeared in a 1909/10 supplement as the Gramognom [*sic* - *Ed.*], and in a Russian catalogue I found the name 'Gnom' by itself, in Arabic type in a sea of Cyrillic. In France, in 1911, it was listed, in a case, as 'Amphion No. 1 bis'. Amphion was the name used in France

for all internal horn Gramophones initially, but in 1912 they became Gramolas. (No. 2 bis, incidentally, was the model known in the UK as No. 1!)

I had given up hope of finding the 'Pearl' name acknowledged officially, when, in a file in the EMI Archive, I came across an Indian supplement of November 1910 which showed and named it, claiming it to be 'A Revolution in Hornless Machines'. It was priced at 45 rupees, but this got the Calcutta branch into trouble with London, who considered the price inadequate and recommended it be increased at once to 50 rupees. I'm glad Calcutta got their knuckles rapped, because otherwise there would have been no admonitory letter, accompanied by the offending supplement, sitting in the Archive to solve my mystery, ninety years later.



Figure 4. The Amphion No. 1 bis, in its box.

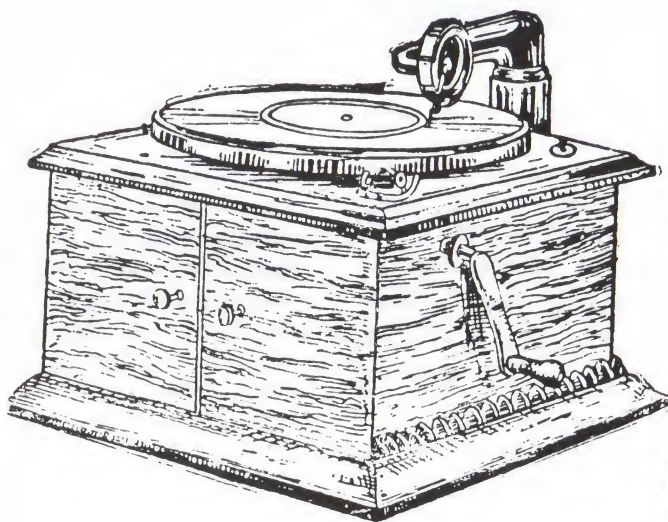


Figure 5. The Amphion No. 1 bis, out of its box, displaying metal louvred grille.

A Revolution in
Hornless Machines.
“THE PEARL”

GRAMOPHONE

Showing “The Pearl” closed.



“The Pearl”

gives

Perfect reproduction.

Pure tonal quality.

Astounding volume.

Unrivalled compactness.

Incomparable value.

Price, Rs. 45.

Figure 6. Indian November 1910 Supplement. (Courtesy of EMI Archives).

Arnold Sugden – Pioneer Extraordinary by Reg Williamson

For those of us active in high quality audio engineering, the 1950s were exciting times. The tautological corruption 'HiFi' had yet to find its way across the Atlantic to the UK, and what commercial products there were available, were produced by small specialist companies run by enthusiasts. More importantly, the merits of a product did not originate in the fertile imagination of the company's advertising department (if, indeed, it had one) but had to earn acceptance and approval by customers already well educated in the intricacies of audio engineering by erudite articles in the then much respected 'Wireless World'.

One such small company was 'Connoisseur', situated in a small town called Brighouse, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. It was here, in 1953, that one of the most important developments in domestic sound reproduction took its first, firm steps. I refer to single groove stereo on long-playing records: the man who started it is now, all but forgotten – Arnold Sugden.

The idea of recording stereophonically on disc was not new. Emory Cook in the USA was already carving his own small niche in history with his 'Binaural' discs, on which each channel was cut as a separate track. They required two pick-ups started on the disc in synchronism to reproduce the recorded material. Apart from the impossibility of preserving phase coherence, Cook's

records were, nevertheless, a novel if ergonomically impractical idea. But as long ago as 1933, the system on which modern techniques are based was developed and patented by Alan Blumlein working in the laboratories of EMI, the parent company of the familiar 'Dog and Horn' HMV label records. Similar, but less impressive work (in my opinion) was also being carried out in the Bell Laboratories in the USA. At the time, EMI, with what was to become its habitual lack of commercial foresight, saw no future in it, and in any case, the imminence of war forestalled any further development. Blumlein's patents languished until c.1958, when an international standard was eventually agreed using his proposed 45/45 system of groove modulation. Paradoxically, most of EMI's competitors demonstrated their enterprise by marketing records that year, but with Blumlein's old company misguidedly placing all their commercial faith in 19 cm/sec. 2-track stereo tapes, their 'Stereosonic' system. Inevitably, because of the cost of both the software and the hardware, it failed, and belatedly, the company conceded defeat and began to produce stereo LPs like all its competitors.

Arnold Sugden was the enthusiastic Managing Director, Technical Director and owner of the 'Connoisseur' company which for some time, had been enjoying considerable commercial success in producing many high quality

record playing products, notably the first British belt driven turntable. This subsequently became available in kit form and was an unusual introduction in the embryo market for such products. Even today, the BDI turntable is much sought after by *aficionados* of vinyl recordings. Practically everything to do with sound reproduction and recording was tackled by the tireless innovator. Connoisseur's first post-war product he designed was a miniature lightweight cartridge and arm for quality reproduction of 78 discs, and he even invented a technique for mass production of the miniature chrome-tipped steel needles that were in very short supply in the immediate post-war era. Pick-up arms, cartridges, amplifiers, loudspeakers, even microphones – all came out bearing the Connoisseur label. As early as 1950, Connoisseur was manufacturing a 33/78 rpm turntable, a high quality pick-up with interchangeable heads and a two-speed disc recording system.

All this is the more remarkable when, during a visit to see Sugden, then 78 years old and still active, I learned that he left school at 14 and had never had any formal engineering training. But, right from the outset of his career, he had demonstrated a natural flair for engineering design of an intuitive kind that is all too rare these days. No matter what the problem, Arnold Sugden would come up with an ingenious answer and a high precision product. Even then, at an age when most men would be sitting back and enjoying the leisure of retirement, he was still working in a small shed outside his kitchen door, producing replacement motors for his turntable. He used a

compression moulder for the plastic formers, a magnetiser of his own design for the rotors, and made the stators on a stamping press, again producing his own cutters. A truly remarkable man, very much in the Edison tradition.

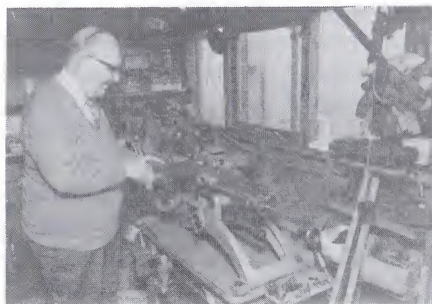


Figure 1. Arnold Sugden, at home in his workshop.

Arnold Sugden's interest in high quality audio was, as for so many of us in those days, linked with a passion for music. Shortly after the introduction of the LP, he became convinced that there was a future for single groove stereo on disc. In 1953, he set to work in a disused church near the Connoisseur factory, often working alone till the early hours of the morning. He finally perfected a stereo cutter head, designed to be fitted to a disc-cutting table the company had already developed for specialist orders. By methods both intuitive and empirical, an approach that would be frowned on today, he evolved a remarkable design that frankly, one cannot easily fault. He knew already, that the mass of the cutter system had to be as low as practicable, which, linked with the compliance of the movement, must push the first fundamental resonance of the system as high as possible. His use of balsa wood as the former material vividly demonstrates his unorthodox, but imaginative approach,

with the fundamental resonance of the system occurring at 4.5KHz, and well damped. This, he corrected by a tuned circuit in the driver amplifier. The equally unusual feature of the system was its efficiency, with as little as 5 watts fully modulating the cutter assembly. The essentially powerful but heavy magnet was mounted separately on the cutter carrier, with just the comparatively light weight of the cutter assembly resting the stylus on the surface of the master lacquer disc. All the well-established refinements were incorporated, such as an advance ball to regulate the depth of the cutter, a heated stylus and a variable groove pitch facility over a range of 100 to 300 lines per inch.

Cartridges capable of playing his records had to be designed and made, of course, and his solution demonstrates more clearly than anything, his uninhibited imagination. At that time, there was a very popular mono crystal cartridge available, designed by Stanley Kelly for the Cosmocord company and called the 'Acos'. It was very much in advance of all competitors in the same price range, as well, being the first crystal type with any claim to a wide frequency response and low tracking weight. Sugden simply took two of these cartridges, mounted them together at right angles to one another, and coupled the two styli with a fine wire link. This combination he mounted in a special moulding. As a short-term solution to an engineering problem, it was an extraordinary approach, although, inevitably, tests later showed that its performance was markedly inferior to that of the cutter. So later, Sugden went on to design a high quality

crystal cartridge himself, but which he marketed for the new 45/45 discs.

By 1956, Sugden was ready to demonstrate his system, having produced some master tapes using spaced Neumann U47 microphones and a tape recorder fitted with a staggered extra head. In the light of experience, Sugden later adopted a much reduced spacing between his microphones, as little as 6 inches separating the pair, and angled outwards by approximately 90 degrees. This basic configuration is still favoured today by some purists. Whilst he had finally decided on vertical and lateral groove modulation, his cutter could, of course, be used for 45/45 as well with an appropriate matrix. In any case, the validity of Blumlein's original patents was in some doubt. So, for the time being, anyway, it had to be vertical/lateral. No conventions or standards existed at that time, so on the basis that the most critical sounds would be from the string section of an orchestra, he determined that the lateral cut should carry the left channel. Additionally, there appeared to be no advantage for any particular phase relationship between channels, so long as it was always consistent with the arbitrarily chosen standard (incidentally, the lack of knowledge of what the original phase relationship was, did create some difficulty for me when attempting to re-matrix some of his original recordings for playback). In the preceding three years, Sugden had recorded a diverse range of material locally – orchestral concerts, brass bands (a speciality of Yorkshire) and cinema organs. From this wide variety, he subsequently cut lacquer stereodiscs. Now, he looked for a platform to

demonstrate his achievement to his peers.

Commercial HiFi Shows were of course, non-existent in 1956. Most new developments were demonstrated every year in London, at a two-day exhibition organised by the (then) British Sound Recording Society. The old BSRA was eventually absorbed into the British branch of the Audio Engineering Society. May 26th, 1956, was a particularly memorable date in the annals of audio advancement, since at that same show that Sugden first introduced his stereo discs, Peter Walker of 'Quad' also demonstrated his prototype electrostatic speaker – another landmark in audio design. As one might expect, there were many waiting in a queue to hear these twin wonders and your contributor was amongst them. To put this in some sort of perspective, neither of the two major record companies in the UK were, at that time, showing any great interest in a disc system based on vertical/lateral or 45/45 techniques. As I mentioned earlier, EMI had misplaced their faith in tapes; Decca were working independently on a high frequency carrier system with no apparent evidence of a sense of urgency. In passing, it is for this system the Decca pick-up was designed, and which still enjoys some popularity with those who play vinyl discs.

To say his demonstration caused a stir would be a master understatement. Almost immediately, Sugden was besieged in Brighouse by all the record companies anxious to take advantage of his pioneering work. EMI even sent a large mobile recording studio to his factory, so that sample discs could be cut from a variety of EMI master tapes.

Many of these were subsequently pressed, thereby revealing some difficulties in pressing techniques. The problems overcome, these too were given a demonstration at the BSRA exhibition in the following year, 1957. Sugden gave me a pair of these pressings and using a matrix I designed, I was able to prepare them for playing with an orthodox 45/45 cartridge, and very impressive they are, too. Had V/L (vertical/lateral) been the adopted standard, there might now have been a Connoisseur record label on the market; and indeed, four discs were prepared and ready for issue, with no less than ten in total. Even the labels and cover sleeves were designed by the enterprising Arnold.

But it was not to be. Illness, probably provoked by overwork, slowed all work on producing stereo discs and eventually, had to be dropped altogether when commercial stereo discs to the universally agreed 45/45 standard were released in 1958. As 'HiFi' arrived and highly competitive, consumer-oriented products began to invade the markets from the Far East, the viability of Sugden's company came under threat. So, in the early 1970s, Arnold Sugden sold his company and retired. The final chapter in the story of his enterprise ends on a sad note, for the company fell into the ruthless hands of asset strippers, and the once familiar name of 'Connoisseur' has now disappeared altogether. An unhappy, but all too common tale in today's commercial world of hifi. Sadder still, no-one knows of the whereabouts of his original cutter system.

However, not so for the name of Arnold Sugden. Within the history of audio, he

has written his own personal paragraph and undoubtedly earns a prime place amongst the pioneers. I attempted to persuade the august Audio Engineering Society to make him some award but to its shame, it was never taken up. Along with many of his contemporaries, he advanced the science and art of sound recording and reproduction to a significant degree, sharing joint honours with many other well-known figures.

Acknowledgements

In the preparation of this article, I warmly acknowledge an earlier essay by the late Roger Maude of Huddersfield Polytechnic, to whom I supplied much of his research information; and of course, I am indebted to

the veteran pioneer Arnold Sugden himself, who sadly, is no longer with us.

APPENDIX – DISC CUTTER SPECIFICATION.

Type – Vertical/lateral motor: Long Moving coils.

Impedance – 15Ω ohms (40 SWG copper on balsa wood formers)

Sensitivity – 5 watts for full modulation Field – Large permanent magnet, separately mounted on carrier

Cutter Stylus – Heated (1 watt), radius 1 thou.

Depth of Cut – Adjustable by means of advance ballpoint stylus

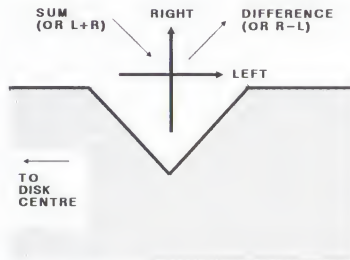
Frequency Response – 30 Hz to 15 KHz

Natural System Resonance – 4.5 KHz

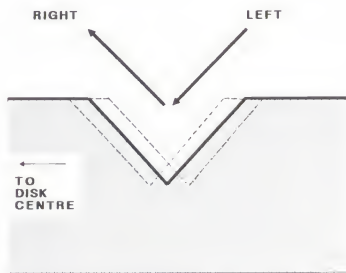
Separation – >20 dB

The driver amplifiers were also a Sugden design, using PX25 valves, and capable of 15 watts into 15Ω.

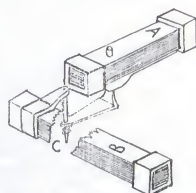
VERT/LAT RECORDING – DIAGRAM SHOWS IN-PHASE MODULATION EACH CHANNEL WITH RESULTANT SIGNAL USING A 45/45 CARTRIDGE



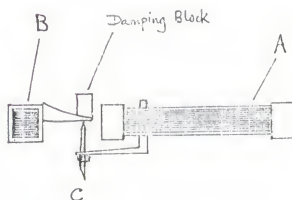
45/45 RECORDING STANDARD – DIAGRAM SHOWS IDENTICAL IN-PHASE (MONO) SIGNAL MODULATION EACH CHANNEL



Figures 2a & 2b. Diagrams showing the alternative stereo signals.



A - Lateral Coil
B - Vertical Coil
C - Stylus



Figures 3a & 3b. Arrangement of Coils and Cutting Stylus using the Vertical/Lateral system.

Cal Stewart and the British 'Negro Laughing Song'

by Tim Brooks

In the course of compiling, with Brian Rust, 'The Columbia Master Book Discography', which covers US Columbia disc recordings from 1901-1934, I encountered some real mysteries¹. Among the problematic recordings were several that were released in, or made exclusively for, Great Britain. This is the story of one of those recordings.

One of the most interesting personalities in the early days of recording was George W. Johnson, the first successful black artist, whose biography I am currently writing. He had a small repertoire, but two of his specialities, 'The Laughing Song' and 'The Whistling Coon', were enormously successful in the USA. He recorded them for numerous cylinder and disc labels between 1890 and 1910.

Johnson was one of Columbia's best-selling artists during the late 1890s, and when the company introduced disc records in late 1901 (on the Climax label), it promptly recorded him doing his two big titles. The numbers were 210 for 'The Negro Laughing Song' (as Columbia called it) and 211 for 'The Whistling Coon'. Judging by the numbers, early takes were presumably made during late 1901, although I have never seen a copy of either on the Climax label, which was in use until mid-1902. Both titles do turn up rather

frequently on Columbia single-face and double-face discs, as well as on client labels. Towards the end of the single-face era, 'The Whistling Coon' was remade by Billy Murray (10-inch, take 9), but all copies of 'The Laughing Song' that I have ever seen or heard of are by Johnson. That includes six takes on four labels.

This is where the mystery begins. When English Columbia introduced double-faced discs in October 1907, one of its very first offerings was 'Negro Laughing Song' on number D4 – by Cal Stewart. The title was also available on single-face disc 210. On the reverse of D4 was Murray's version of 'The Whistling Coon' (211)². The single-face numbers prove that these are US recordings, but no copy of the disc has ever turned up to confirm the identities of the singers, or the takes used. A year later, when Columbia brought out double-discs in the USA, it used Johnson's version of the song. There was even a late take (take 12) issued in the USA on which Johnson's original piano accompaniment was replaced with an orchestra.

It is a little strange that English Columbia chose to include these very American recordings on its inaugural double-face list. Possibly the fact that there had already been popular British versions of the songs by Burt Shepard

and others led the company to think patrons might find US versions amusing as well. Cal Stewart, who had previously recorded 'The Laughing Song' for Edison in the USA, was perhaps felt to be better known in Great Britain than Johnson.

To confuse the matter even further, matrix lists compiled by Columbia librarian Helene Chmura in the 1950s, from now-lost company files, identify the artist on 210 as Cal Stewart, not George W. Johnson. Oddly, Johnson's name does not appear in these lists at all. Perhaps only the last artist to record a title was reflected in the files. Perhaps the Stewart take, whatever it was, was made especially for Great Britain. Until someone finds a copy of Columbia D4 we cannot be sure.

Poor old George, a former slave, suffered many indignities in his lifetime. Despite the fact that he had been one of Columbia's best-selling artists a few years earlier, it appears that the company had both of his 'trademark' titles remade by others, while he was still alive. He couldn't have laughed at that.

Following is a list of English versions of Johnson's 'Laughing Song' that I have identified to date. (Johnson's own version was imported by Berliner in 1898, but was apparently available only briefly.) Additional information is welcome, as I am no expert on British recordings, and have probably missed some.

'The Laughing Song' – (George W. Johnson)

Maurice Farkoa:

- ◇ 7" Berliner 2125 (19th October 1898)
- ◇ 7" Gramophone 32651 (c.1899), 32125

Note: titled 'Le Fou Rire' and sung in French. It is not certain whether this is the Johnson song. Farkoa recorded another 'Laughing Song' at the same time on Berliner 2128 and Gramophone 32654, which is also unidentified.

Burt Shepard:

- ◇ 7" Gramophone 2-2030 (released Jan. 1902)
- ◇ 7" Gramophone 2-2164 (released Oct. 1902)
- ◇ 10" Gramophone 2-2803 (released Jun 1903)
- ◇ 7" Zonophone 42042 (as George Atkinson; recorded 5 January 1904)
- ◇ Zonophone 553 (1911)
- ◇ HMV B468 (from 2-2803, released 1915)
- ◇ Sterling cylinder 1102 (1907)
- ◇ Pathé 1448 (8½" disc dubbed from the cylinder, released 1908)

Wilson Hallett:

- ◇ Gramophone 2-2584 (released Feb. 1902)
- ◇ 7" Zonophone 42020 (31 December 1903)

W. W. Whitlock:

- ◇ Edison Bell Winner 2060 (1912) as 'Johnson's Laughing Song'

Al Johnson:

- ◇ Scala Ideal 7025 (1923)

Charles Penrose:

His widely recorded 'Laughing Policeman' used Johnson's melody with different lyrics. Among the recorded versions were the following. The 1934 Columbia catalogue also contains a dozen 'Laughing Policeman' sketches by Penrose.

- ◇ Regal G7816 (as Charles Jolly, released September 1922)
- ◇ Regal G9391 (as Charles Jolly, released November 1929)
- ◇ Columbia DB 4014 (1926)
- ◇ Columbia FB 1184 (1934)

Sources:

Jim Walsh, 'In Justice to George Washington Johnson', *Hobbies*, February 1971

Brian Rust, 'British Berliner, G & T, and Zonophone 7-inch Records', *Talking Machine Review*, nos. 63/64, Autumn 1981

Sydney H. Carter, 'A Catalogue of Sterling Cylinder Records', *Talking Machine Review*, 1975;

Catalogues and records in the author's collection.

For the Footnotes to this article, please refer to p.445.

We Also Have Our Own Records, part 12 – ‘The Daily Herald’ to ‘A. C. Delacour de Brisay’ by Frank Andrews

[This continuing series of articles by Frank Andrews focusses on the owners of labels who were not in the business of recording or manufacturing records, but relied upon others to supply finished discs with the labels they controlled, made from the suppliers' own stock of matrices or by processing fresh recordings from whatever source.]

THE DAILY HERALD was the daily newspaper which, from 1945 to 1946, managed the National Brass Bands Championships of Great Britain and supported other brass band festivals. A festival held in London's Royal Albert Hall on 1st. November 1947 was recorded by Levy's Sound Studios and four 12" sides were sold by the newspaper under the numbers BB.100 to BB.103. The labels were brown and ‘Daily Herald’ was printed in the style that headed the newspaper itself.

THE DAILY MAIL also had records. A series called ‘Brush Up Your French’ had been recorded by The Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd., in 1929, and logically, bore catalogue numbers

prefixed ‘DM’. In 1930, Mudies’ Select Libraries of Queen’s House, Kingsway, London, advertised that they had the sole selling rights in this French language course.



Figure 1. One of the Daily Mail French language course records.

The recordings augmented the conversations, written in French, which appeared in the Daily Mail itself, they having been arranged by Dr. W. C. Hartog, MA. This was substantiated by vocal announcements in English at the close of each face of the discs. The conversations themselves were recorded by M. et Mme. Regnier.

Footnotes to ‘Cal Stewart and the ‘British Negro Laughing Song’’, by Tim Brooks.

1. Tim Brooks, ‘The Columbia Master Book Discography, Volume I; With a History of the Columbia Phonograph Company to 1934’, Greenwood Press, 1999.

2. ‘Columbia Double-Face Records, October 1907’ (four-page supplement published by the Columbia Phonograph Company, Gen’l, London.) A photocopy of this rare item was kindly provided by Frank Andrews. The record is also listed in Andrews’ valuable discography of British Columbia, ‘Columbia 10" Records, 1904-1930’, CLPGS, 1985.

The **DAILY MAIL MYSTERY RECORD** became available in December 1932 in conjunction with the paper offering a first prize of £1,000 in a competition, a second prize of £500 and fifty consolation prizes of £5 each. The discs had to be bought from record dealers and those who sold the discs to the winning entries were to receive £200 each from the Daily Mail.

Two entry forms were supplied with each disc purchased and a separate coupon, cut from issues of the newspaper, had to accompany each form sent in along with a submitted slogan, of not more than twelve words, in praise of the paper.



Figure 2. The Daily Mail Mystery competition record.

There were thirteen rules governing the competition, the first of which asked competitors to name the 27 artists to be heard on the double-sided disc, the entry form having a list of 141 artists from which the 27 had been chosen. That list comprised 44 vocalists, 42 stage stars, 26 instrumentalists, 15 dance bands, 6 light orchestras, 2 sketch companies, 2 military bands and 1 brass band.

Any number of entries could be sent in. The slogan competition was only to be

judged in the event that a number of correct lists appeared, thereby establishing outright winners for the first and second prizes. No employees of Associated Newspapers or EMI could enter. The disc itself comprised extracts of recordings from the Columbia, "His Master's Voice", Parlophone, Regal and Zonophone catalogues, and were transferred by the Gramophone Co. Ltd, as the 'OB'-prefixed matrix numbers confirm. December was the last month in which Regal and Zonophone records had separate labels. January 14th, 1933 was the closing date of the competition.

Following the publication of the correct list of artists on the Mystery Record, competitors had to have their claims in by January 18th, 1933, first postal delivery, the competition having closed on the 14th.

Of the 27 artists on the disc, only ten were on side one, and comprised (1) Ambrose & his Orchestra, (2) "Hutch" (Leslie A. Hutchinson), (3) Derickson & Brown, (4) Binnie Hale, (5) Doris Hare, (6) Howard Jacobs, (7) Robert Naylor, (8) Billy Mayerl, (9) Rae da Costa, and (10) Debroy Somers Band.



Figure 3. A Danceland record for dancing at correct ballroom tempo.

DANCELAND. Discs on this label were made in both 12" and 10" diameters. They were made by others for Danceland Publications Ltd., a company whose factual details I have not yet researched. A later subdivision of the company was called 'Danceland Records', with its first address at 34 Exeter Street, Strand, London, WC2.

'Danceland', a periodical, had been in publication since 1937. On reaching edition no. 29, its name was changed to 'Dance News', 'Saturday Weekly', and then, 39 editions later, it was changed again to 'Danceland Monthly'. As far as I can gather, during the eleven years up until mid-1948, Danceland Publications had shown no involvement with recordings under any label of its own, but things were about to change.

In July 1948, The Association of Ballrooms Ltd. arranged for a mass meeting of ballroom proprietors, teachers of dancing and promoters of dances and dancing, which was held in the Metropolitan Theatre, Edgware Road, Paddington, London, W. (alas, no longer there!) The object of the meeting was to discuss the recent refusal of Phonographic Performances Ltd. to issue new licences which enabled licensees to play gramophone records, in public, for the purposes of dancing or for instruction in dancing. The agenda also called for the meeting to discuss the increased charges then being asked for the performance of copyright scores, either live or through recordings, by The Performing Rights Society Ltd.

Danceland Monthly had only just created its Danceland Records division and it had its Mr. C. St. J. Murphy in attendance at the meeting as the platform representative for Danceland

Records. In his contribution to the proceedings he informed that, in the light of the conditions being imposed, his company was prepared to buy music scores, from which to arrange recordings which could be sold to purchasers who would have the right to play them for public use without any payment of fees. He then produced a graph to show that the price could be from £5 per month if there were 100 subscribers, or only 35 shillings per month with 1000 subscribers.

He had been encouraged by the response to the filling in of forms his company had put out introducing the project. He had received moral support from the Radio & Television Retailers Association, another organisation which had already been informed by Phonographic Performances that no fresh licences were to be issued for public performances from gramophone records in those conditions where live performers could be employed, they to be sole judges in such matters.

Mr. Murphy went on to say that Danceland Records were to be made by a first-class orchestra, with no vocals and in strict dance tempi, for which he was willing to accept the Official Board rulings as to tempi. To ensure playback conformed, a stroboscopic device would form a part of their labels' design.

Mr. Murphy, continuing, said the proposed service would be an initial supply of twelve discs to subscribers, with another four per month to follow, thus totalling 56 different discs for a full year at a cost (at a very conservative estimate) of less than the combined fees to The Performing Rights Society and Phonographic Performances Ltd.

A Mr. Pickering, speaking at the meeting, observed that trouble with The Performing Rights Society had begun as long ago as 1908.

Such was the situation as of July 1948, with Danceland Publications having recently acquired The British Songwriters Club, thereby giving them access to some composers with their extant and future compositions for recording purposes.

In August 1948, it was reported that under the direction of Mr. Murphy, Danceland Records were forging ahead – their records were to be available free of all copyright or performing restrictions. A number of other music users' associations were beginning to support the project.

By October 1948, Phonographic Performances had begun refusing licences to those who played records in public for dancing or practising dancing. The BBC, theatres, music halls, cinemas and dance halls had already been severely pruned for licences, some losing theirs completely. The restrictions were being imposed in conjunction with the Musicians' Union. The Performing Rights Society had now increased its charges by 200%, it was reported.

I cannot say when the first Danceland Records became available, nor if the first issues only went to subscribers, as was envisaged in the promulgated scheme of 1948, for the first advertisement with regard to the discs seems not to have been published until the December 10th issue of 1949, when the Danceland periodical was again a weekly paper.

Seventeen months delay between proposals to provide a service and actually doing so requires some explanation, if that is what occurred, and I can only think that Danceland may have had problems finding a business to press its discs, for Danceland were rebelling against the *status quo*? From December 1949, advertisements were published weekly although fresh releases were approximately on a monthly basis.

By January 1950, there were already three classes of Danceland Records, viz., (1) Standard Correct Ballroom Tempo, (2) Old-time Correct Ballroom Tempo, and (3) a Classic Series, and all were advertised in the following manner – *"Now available to ballrooms, etc. at reduced price of 5s 0d., including purchase tax – No Restrictions – No Form Filling – No Licences – No Performing Fees. Waltzes, Foxtrots, Quicksteps, Tangos, Rumbas, Sambas, Paso Doblés, etc., Old Time and Light Music"*.

A new feature, with reference to the actual recordings, was announced in an advertisement in the May 20th, 1950 edition of Dance News Weekly, which informed that 'The World's finest recording system "ffidelitone" [*sic* – *Ed.*] of The Master Sound System was available only on Danceland records'.

The Master Sound System Recording Co. Ltd. had taken over the Marguerite Sound Services long before, in 1933, this being a business founded by Cecil E. Watts, later of the Dust-Bag fame. During World War II, Watts' business had been taken over by the General Post Office, and afterwards, it went to British Insulated Cables Co. Ltd., with Watts as a technical consultant.



Figure 4. A Danceland label in the Old Time series in a Danceland sleeve highlighting the 'ffidelitone' system.

Added to the advertisements which regularly appeared in May 1950 was "*Now available to schools of dancing*". In July, Danceland Publications stated that its large catalogue of records ensured an adequate library of modern and old-time numbers for ballrooms and dancing schools, that colour-coded labels made for easy selection of required repertoire, and the stroboscopic edges enabled strict dance tempi to be maintained. Their advertisements continued with "*Records unbreakable – Used now by all the leading schools of dancing. Send for catalogue and order form*". Was this an indication that the records were now on sale generally, to all who wished to purchase?

In the December 6th edition of Danceland News was featured a 'Record of the Week', in this instance, no. DL 264 in the Old-Time Series, a series which had begun with DLP-prefixed catalogue numbers, DLP 25 being the lowest number known to me. With DL 264 came written instructions

teaching the steps to be danced to one side's title, which was a newly invented dance. Other Danceland discs had dance instructions issued. That same December, DL 271 had instructions accompanying a Spanish Fandango, the title of the piece composed by Ray Downes, which had been recorded by the Danceland Old-Time Orchestra. The labels on this disc were without a stroboscopic edge.

The new Universal Artistes Series was launched in December 1950.

Danceland Records, chronologically, were not issued in a strict numerical order. For example, DL 263, a 12" diameter disc, was not issued until April 1951. That was a specially arranged recording of a Waltz Cotillon, the arrangement ensuring that either a half of the piece, or the whole, could be played with the correct introduction to each. 12" discs cost 7s., (35p.) purchase tax paid, but postage was extra.

The May 9th. 1951 edition of Danceland News shows that Danceland Publications Ltd. had moved from Exeter Street to 78 Southwark Street, London, SE1.

A dance teacher from New South Wales was featured in June showing him playing over Danceland records for a practice dance and having the caption "*One of the many hundreds of teachers, all over the country, to use these completely restrictionless discs*".

It was announced in August 1951 that Wally Fryers and his Perfect Tempo Dance Orchestra, which had been recording for Decca records, then had four titles out on Danceland records. He would be followed by Henry Jacques and his Correct Tempo Orchestra in

November's releases, Jacques having been engaged to replace Danceland Records' own Ballroom Orchestra, which had been recording for three years. (This puts Danceland's initial recordings back to late 1948).

The prices of Danceland Records were maintained throughout 1951, with the 10" at 5s. (25p) each, covering –

- DL 0001, plus Universal Artistes Series – gold on blue labels;
- DLC 1001, plus Classic Series – gold on green labels;
- DL 250, plus Old-Tyme Dance Series – gold on plum labels;
- DL 500 modern Dance Series – various colours, according to tempo, on white labels – single colour or two colours.

The last advertisement for Danceland records which I have discovered, was published in April 1954, in which they were described as *"To be the best and are played in hundreds of ballrooms. Write for free catalogue"*.

Not all labels gave the Exeter Street or the Southwark Street addresses, some simply stated "Specially manufactured for Danceland Publications Ltd.". How many businesses supplied the records I do not know. Besides the Master Sound System, Gui de Buire of Bond Street, W1, made some recordings. One artist – Helene – singing some Song of the Steppes items, was on a disc of French origin, with one face impressed in the wax with "Melux (or Metux) Pyral" below the label.

My roster of artists known to be on Danceland discs totals 24, including The City of Edinburgh Police Band, The Trinidad All Steel Percussion Band,

Pipe-Majors D. Ramsay and Angus McAuley, The 12th Street Paraders, Crombie's Zombies, The Parisian Quintette, Frank Lynn & His Orchestra, The Miami Serenaders, Latin-American Quartette, The Charloteers, George Boue, Roger Bourdin, The Royal Concert Orchestra, besides those already mentioned and Danceland's variously titled dance orchestras plus a Salon Orchestra.

DARLING'S DREAM. Here is a label about which I know nothing. The label tells us the disc was made in Germany, and my particular example was almost certainly made for export to Britain or parts of the British Empire (as it then was), for its title was the British National Anthem. However, as all we have is a loose label from the late Len Watts' label collection, we do not know the size of the disc or whether it was acoustically or electrically recorded.



Figure 5. The Darling's Dream label.

I suspect it was a less than 10" diameter disc, made for the small kind of tin-plate gramophones to be sold in children's toy

markets, and often made from recycled tin.

The matrix-cum-catalogue number of 312 gives no clue at all as to the manufacturer. I have failed to discover any British concern handling such a label in Britain. Can any Member help?

DEFIANCE RECORDS. I know of one Member whom, I am 99% sure has examples of these short-lived discs in his collection, but they are without labels. Yet the contents of some of them match the only list of Defiance Records which was published in a trade periodical in October 1915.

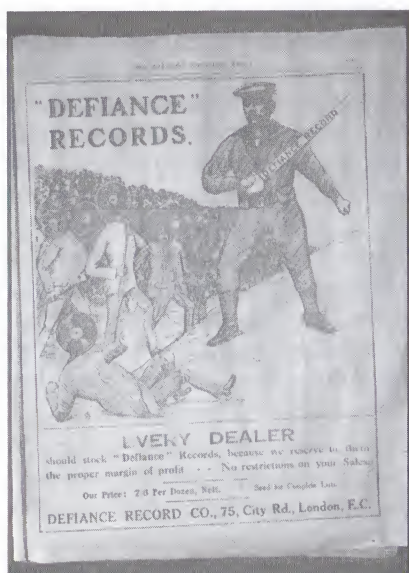


Figure 6. An advertisement for Defiance Records from the Talking Machine Review.

The introduction of these records involved a number of businesses before they were pressed in the works at Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, Middlesex. These works had formerly been

occupied by John Watson Hawd's Disc Record Co. Ltd., on which he had taken out a lease in 1912 when his business was in occupation of the works at Wellington Mills, Stockport, Cheshire. Here he stocked the bulk of the Nicole Records masters, as well as other matrices from other manufacturers. Hawd was forced to delay moving his business to Harrow until 1913, because suffragettes had broken into the Rosslyn Crescent works and damaged the services therein.

Pressing for clients began *circa* July 1913, J. L. Blum & Co. with its Pioneer Records being the last customer of Disc Record Co. Ltd., which failed in early 1915.

The plant at the Harrow works was then leased to W. H. Reynolds, Ltd., a company founded in 1913, which announced in April 1915 that the Defiance Records were to be made at Harrow. In May 1915, it was disclosed that the manufacturing plant held 2000 matrices and would be capable of a large output once pressing had begun. No mention was made of there being any fresh recordings.

With a mortgage debenture created on June 24th to raise £750, the works were to be styled 'The Reno Works'. In the meantime, W. H. Reynolds had gone into voluntary liquidation, having transferred its business to an associate company, The Utility Trading Company, which then changed its name, incorporating itself as W. H. Reynolds (1915) Ltd. The officers concerned in those businesses then formed a further company called The Renoplex Manufacturing Co. Ltd., which took control of The Reno Works. Renoplex also occupied a two-floor factory at 48a

City Road, London, and had its office at 75 City Road. It was from that office that The Defiance Record Company put out this announcement to the trade – *“Defiance Records – 7s. 6d. per dozen nett to dealers”*, and a trade periodical described the discs thus – *“The material is unbreakable and its wearing qualities are said to be phenomenal. The company has circularised the trade enclosing the first supplement of twelve records. The company rely on two special features for the trade’s reception. Firstly the price, and secondly, the durability.”*

The company’s circular read – *“Dear Sirs – We have pleasure in bringing to your notice the first supplement of the new Defiance unbreakable records. These are entirely different from ordinary disc records and can be thrown about with impunity without the least injury to them. The surface and sound track are highly polished which reduces the scratchy sound to almost vanishing point. The titles listed are all good selling band selections and well paired. We have a full catalogue of 200 titles but, owing to the fact that a portion of the works are engaged in Government munitions work, naturally there will be some delay in the issue of the complete set. There are no objectionable restrictions put upon the sale of these records and we recognise that the dealer is the one who should make the profit. We are also the only manufacturer of the disc supplying dealers only. A first sample of three dozen will be sent, carriage and packing free, for 22s. 6d. The dealer’s price is 7s. 6d. per dozen nett, carriage paid, in half gross lots. Terms – cash with order. May we be favoured with a trial order*

only as we then shall be assured of a repeat. Thanking you in intelligent anticipation.”

Of the 24 sides listed, I have deduced that 19 of the titles would be from the matrix stock formerly with The Disc Record Company, the source being the American Record Company in the USA, managed by Hawthorn, Sheble & Prescott, the American pressings known as “Indian Records”, and the 10-inch matrices sent to Britain when American Record Company was forced out of business by legislation. Those matrices were used here, earlier, to press some Britannic, The Leader, Pelican and Pioneer discs.

The Defiance Discs were numbered from A 1 onwards, with the October published list repeated in December 1915. I can find no further mention of the Defiance records from 1916 onwards. The discs of the Member whom, I believe, has sample, label-less copies of the Defiance records, do not conform to the unbreakable description put out by the company. They appear to be solid, black stock material, yet they could differ from ordinary black shellac records and be unbreakable.

The reason the Renoplex company was formed was because the Articles of Association of the Reynolds companies did not provide for the making of munitions. Renoplex signed for the taking over of the Harrow works on September 24th, 1915 for a purchase price of £1,000, which was never paid. The company made no new recordings.

A. C. DELACOUR DE BRISAY. Not having seen the label on these discs, which, I believe, were black printed in gold, I decided to list them under De

Brisay, rather than under the letter 'A'. De Brisay sold his records, by post, from Bedford School, Bedford, from late 1936 well into 1938, and perhaps later still?

Brisay was a master at the school, and was an enthusiastic devotee of church organ and grand organ music. He spent many a Sunday evening in Christ Church Cathedral in the City of Oxford, listening to recitals played by Dr. George Ley, the resident organist.

With electrical recording having arrived in the UK in late 1925, organs became an important instrument with which to exhibit and demonstrate the new and exciting recording medium. Soon, De Brisay was to be found in the pages of 'The Organist' – a quarterly periodical – reviewing the new recordings of serious music on church and grand organs.

At first, Columbia and "HMV" records began to have quite serious musical works for the organ recorded from the massive historic repertoire of western culture, but it soon became apparent such records were not selling well, and lighter pieces for the organ began to be the only fare recorded. This circumstance annoyed De Brisay, who already had a book of his published in 1936, entitled 'The Organ and its Music'. He decided that the only way lovers of the more serious works were to be enabled to purchase recordings of such, was for himself to have recordings made privately.

To this end, and with the mid-thirties having seen the rise of recording studios catering for those who required to have private recordings made, De Brisay, through his brother-in-law, contracted Mr. Leslie Stroud to record a church organ in late 1936. The Stroud

Recording Studio business had offices at 122 Baker Street, London, W.

Before he contracted Stroud, De Brisay had been in Paris, where he took in a recital by Mlle. Noellie Pierront, who was a pupil of the blind organist, André Marchal. Back in London, he persuaded the Organ Music Society to invite the French organists to England to give recitals. His arrangements for making organ recordings coincided with her recital appearance in England and he persuaded her to be first organist. This she agreed to do, without a fee, and arranged to play pieces by Bach and a piece by Buxtehude.

A search was instigated to find a suitable organ on which to record.

After many rejections, the organ chosen was that in the German Lutheran Evangelical Church of St. Mary le Savoy, which was in Cleveland Street, at the back of Tottenham Court Road, London, W. The organ there had been built either in 1756 or 1757 by the German organbuilder, John Snetzler, who had settled in London in 1740, probably because the German Lutheran Church at that time, was in the precincts of the former Savoy Hospital.

The Savoy Manor had been developed into a Palace by Henry IV, having a separate chapel. The whole complex was then destroyed by Wat Tyler and his followers but, under Henry IV's will, the Palace site was rebuilt as a hospital and almshouses between 1512 and 1517, with the chapel rebuilt on its former site, and three other churches built within the grounds near the River Thames. The chapel stands to this day on what is now Savoy Hill, Strand, and is a Chapel Royal. It was named St. Mary-le-Strand, the first church of the

Savoy parishioners from 1564 until 1717, but was referred to as St. Mary le Savoy. All the other buildings had gone by 1817 to make way for the construction of the approach to Waterloo Bridge. The German Lutheran Church, one of those in the Savoy grounds pulled down, lost its organ at that time or earlier. It was eventually installed in the Cleveland Street church.

By 1935 the organ was in such a poor condition that it could hardly operate properly, so it was rebuilt by Walker & Sons in that year.

It had been the first organ in England to have pedals: it also contained a "zauberflöte" rank and a true "dulciana" rank, all inventions of John Snetzler.

De Brisay's first recording session with this very important and historic organ was scheduled for October 17th, 1936, but due to awkward electrical supplies and other technical difficulties to be overcome, the session had to be delayed for one week, to the very day when Mlle. Noellie Pierront had to return to Paris.

On the day, after more difficulties in the morning, eight 12-inch sides were recorded suitable for issue under the heading 'Recordings from Neglected Masterpieces of Organ Literature', as four double-sided discs at 7s. 6d. each.

The limited number of pressings were completely sold out with some titles scheduled to be broadcast over American radio.

The recordings were reviewed in December 1936. In the meantime, a second series of recordings had been undertaken using the same organ, but with Ralph Downes, FRCO, as the organist, then the resident organist at the

famous Brompton Oratory. He had recently returned from Toronto, where he had been playing. His North American experiences went back to 1928 when he had been associated with Princeton University. He had trained at the Royal College of Music in London and at Oxford University.

His recordings were issued as nos. 6, 7 and 8. His no. 5 could not be issued owing to copyright difficulties. The recordings were reviewed in March 1937. They did not sell well, causing De Brisay to drop their price to 5s. by March 1938.

Again, in the meanwhile, he began to promote a series of recordings of Buxtehude's compositions to mark the tercentenary of the composer's birth. Dr. George Thalben Ball was to be the organist, presumably at the same organ (?). Three hundred subscribers were solicited to make the venture a viable one, but sufficient interest was not forthcoming and, as De Brisay remarked in a letter, the response to his October 1937 appeal had been met with complete indifference. That third series was never made. De Brisay had suffered a considerable financial loss in his attempts to promote organ recordings with repertoires he considered worthy.

The numbers on the discs he did have produced were prefixed SRS, the initials of the Stroud Recording Studios.

The church and its Walker/Snetzler organ were bombed out of existence during the 1940s air raids by German aircraft, which makes any still extant discs quite valuable as a repository of what was an old and historically famous organ.

to be continued...

Wyper's 'Empress' Records

A Case Study of an Early Cottage Industry Cylinder Producer by Keith Chandler

It is well known that one of the earliest problems encountered by the architects of the burgeoning commercial music industry during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was that of obtaining sufficient volume from the source instrument to register undistorted vibrations through the cutting arm of the recorder. It was quickly discovered that certain instruments – including banjo, concertina, and trumpet, but not apparently, harmonica, or guitar – achieved the desired effect. Fortunately for posterity, the melodeon, or button accordion, also fell into that category.

As Frank Andrews has ably revealed, the early history of cylinder production in Britain is peppered with small production companies. Given the infrequency with which some brand names appear on the open market, the print runs of these issues is likely to have been relatively small. But perhaps the least production-intensive of all were those items produced under the *aegis* of Peter Wyper, a music *entrepreneur* based in Hamilton, Lanarkshire, a small town to the south-east of Glasgow.

Peter Wyper was baptised in Dalziel, Lanarkshire, on 28th March 1861. Initially a pit worker, by 1902 he had a successful music retail shop on Cadzow Street in Hamilton. A younger brother was Daniel MacKenzie Wyper, baptised

on 23rd October 1872 in Cambusnethan. Each became, in turn, Scottish Champion Melodeon Player, and both enjoyed an extensive recording career, mainly for Columbia: Peter until his death in 1920, and Daniel until 1926. One Columbia catalogue named them, along with John J. Kimmel, and Pietro and Guido Diero, the 'greatest accordion players in the world'¹.

Prior to recording into multiple cylinder recording horns at an unknown date (but after mid-1904), each cylinder issued on the Empress label was an unique artefact, and copies bearing the same issue number and title are liable to be different performances. One such is announced as -

Lady Mary Ramsey: Played by Peter Wyper; Empress Records.

'Lady Mary Ramsey' was Empress cylinder no. 12. It was produced by Peter Wyper sitting in front of the recording horn of a cylinder cutting machine. In the August 1903 issue of the trade journal 'Talking Machine News', published in London, Peter Wyper wrote:

'...I have sold a considerable number of these records [i.e., Empress cylinders] locally, but as I have to play and make each record separately, I should take it as a favour if you could enlighten me as to how to take one record from another.

*It is so monotonous playing the same tune time after time.*²

Brother Daniel similarly sat in front of the horn and played his melodeon. The format was similar, only on these could be heard, for example:

Jenny's Bawbee; Played by D. Wyper;
Empress Records.

The boredom of duplication was alleviated to some extent by playing before a bank of recording horns³. One of Daniel's daughters remembers being told of their recording on the first floor of a warehouse located opposite Peter's Cadzow Street shop (the warehouse was a *lingerie* store when I was last there in 1994), and of how they made 'a lot of money'⁴. Some, though, were recorded in Daniel's home, with his wife brushing away the shavings from the newly-cut groove during production.⁵ According to a personal communication from John S. Dales, two distinct types of wax were used in production: soft and brown, running at 140 rpm; and, later, hard and black, at the standard 160 rpm.

So, while the early Empress cylinders bearing the same issue number feature unique performances, there is no reason why one copy of the same title might not be played by Peter and another by Daniel, though this might only be authenticated aurally. And, of course, earlier numbers were being re-recorded with varying frequency, depending on sales. So, 'Killarney', on Empress 4, may turn up as an unique pre-1904 copy, or as a later, duplicated copy. So few examples have apparently survived that comparison has so far proven impossible. What is certain is that, within given distribution parameters, they were evidently quite popular and perhaps even widespread. At least 160

titles were available, probably more: although I only know of 22 as yet.

Those few which do survive in their original boxes bear the legend –

Wyper's 'Empress' Records.
Made in HAMILTON, Scotland.
Gladstone & Co., Printers, Glasgow.

The titles and numbers are hand-written in ink on a specially prepared sticker stuck on the lid of the box. They were sold in the Cadzow Street shop, by Peter Wyper through the post, and by other retailers, including H. Robertson of Dunfermline, and Jupp's Music Warehouse at 88 Great Junction Street, Leith. Amelia Jupp was trading at this address only between 1900 and 1902, which gives us further evidence of early activity by the Wypers.

Peter Wyper ran advertisements in many of the local newspapers over a good number of years. These became increasingly elaborate as his stock expanded, and as he opened branches in Motherwell and Wishaw. One early example, drawing attention solely to his Empress output (though the label is not named) appeared in five consecutive issues of 'Talking Machine News', beginning in March 1905⁶ –

PETER WYPER

The Champion Accordion Player's
Phonograph Records

All masters. Loud, clear, and distinct
Scotch music.

Solos, Strathspeys, Reels, Hornpipes, Jigs,
Marches, &c.

Retail price, 1/3 each. Special prices to the
trade per doz.

Sample sent post free for 1/3.

Lists sent on application: Address:-

PETER WYPER,
RECORD MANUFACTURER,
Cadzow Street, HAMILTON, Scotland, N.B.

WYPER'S MUSIC WAREHOUSE,

For HIGH-CLASS PIANOS & ORGANS BY BEST MAKERS,
AT PRICES TO SUIT ALL CLASSES.

Seamophones, Phonographs, and Records—Largest Stock in Lanarkshire.
KEENEST PRICES.

Wyper's
Famous
International
Melodeons
with Steel
Reeds,
cannot be
equalled.

Latest
Music,
Books, &c.



PIANO AND ORGAN TUNING AND REPAIRING
By Experienced Workmen. Charges Moderate.
A Post Card will receive Immediate Attention.

NOTE ADDRESS—

PETER WYPER,
CADZOW STREET, HAMILTON.

Figure 1. Advertisement for Wyper's Music Warehouse, in Hamilton.

Discography

In the following discography, I have ascribed performances to a specific brother only for those which I have heard. Of these, four were in the collection of the late Len Watts, three in the collection of John S. Dales, one kindly supplied by Douglas Lorimer – ‘Polka’, and one – ‘La Va’ – in my own collection. I have seen, but not heard,

Peter Wyper (melodeon);
prob. 1903; Hamilton, Lanarkshire

Lady Mary Ramsey	Empress 12 [8]
Afton Water	Empress
Edinboro Toun	Empress

c. 1901-1907; Hamilton, Lanarkshire

Scotch Selection	Empress 21
Miller o' Drone	Empress 43
Polka	Empress 80
La Va	Empress 107
Flowers of Edinburgh	Empress 124

Daniel Wyper (melodeon);
c. 1901-1907; Hamilton, Lanarkshire

A Guid New Year	Empress 108
Jenny's Bawbee	Empress

two items in the collection of Reg Hall – ‘High Level Hornpipe’ and ‘Lord Lyndoch’, while John S. Dales also provided details of a dozen others which he formerly owned, two of which – issue no. 12, and ‘A Guid New Year’ – duplicate titles within the Len Watts collection, although an aural comparison has not been possible. The remainder were documented by Tom Gayton⁷.

Peter or Daniel Wyper (melodeon);
c. 1901-1907; Hamilton, Lanarkshire

Killarney	Empress 4
Stirling Castle	Empress 11
Scotch Reel	Empress 75
Auld Scotch Songs	Empress 76
Bonnie Dundee	Empress 81
Quadrille No.3 & No.4	Empress 102
Schottische	Empress 121
Royal Belfast	Empress 122
Herdeaston Barn Dance	Empress 135
High Level Hornpipe	Empress 139
Connaughtman's Rambles	Empress 160
Lord Lyndoch	Empress



Figure 2. Empress 107 – ‘La Va’.



Figure 3. Empress 11 – ‘Stirling Castle’.

Footnotes.

1. US Columbia Records catalogue 1917.
2. 'Talking Machine News', I (August 1903), 4.
3. Tony Engle and Tony Russell, sleeve notes to the vinyl album 'Melodeon Greats' (Topic 12T376), 1978.
4. Interview with Margaret Price (*née* Wyper), Burnbank, April 1994.
5. Interview with Charlotte Hands (*née* Wyper), Burnbank, April 1994.
6. 'Talking Machine News', II, no. 11 (March 1905), 470.
7. Tom Gayton, 'Talking Machine Review', 2 (February 1970), 59. Gayton gives no. 160 as 'Couranughtman's Ramble', and this may be an error either on the original lid, or in transcription. The last of his entries, 'Lord ... ?...' may be 'Lord Lyndoch'.
8. John S. Dales' copy of issue no. 12 has 'Lady Mary Ramsdale' written on the lid. The more common title is 'Lady Mary Ramsey', and Len Watts' copy is certainly announced by this latter name.

Further biographical and contextual detail on the Wypers' recording careers may be found in my article 'Early Recordings of Traditional Dance Music: Peter and Daniel Wyper, Champion

Melodeon Player of Scotland', Article MT005, 'Musical Traditions Internet Magazine, at <<http://www.mustrad.org.uk>>

This article stems from research undertaken for a forthcoming book on a group of a dozen Scottish melodeon players who recorded commercially prior to the First World War. Of these, Jack Williams and A. J. Scott remain biographical (though not discographical) mysteries, and I would welcome any information on them. I would also be grateful to learn if any collector has copies of cylinders made by James Brown for the Clarion label in 1913, or of his Marathon discs recorded that same year. It goes without saying that I would welcome any additions to the Empress discography. And while I have near complete discographical details for the flat disc output of these players I would also be glad to receive matrix details for three Columbia-leased Canadian issues by Peter Wyper on the Vitaphone label (nos. 10070, 10071, and 10135) or to learn of any others.

I would like to acknowledge my debt to John S. Dales, who unstintingly shared his vast knowledge of cylinders with me, and who commented on a late draft of this piece.

If you have any information, however seemingly insignificant, please write to me at: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] South Leigh, Oxon; OX8 6XN; (tel.: [REDACTED]); or e-mail me, care of: [REDACTED]



The Northern Group Chairman takes to the Lakes, using the correct audio equipment...

BOOK REVIEW

by Dr. Peter Martland

ZONOPHONE SINGLE-FACED RECORDS

Compiled by Frank Andrews and Ernie Bayly

Published by City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society Ltd

178 pages; price £24 plus postage, from the CLPGS Booklist

We've waited a long time for this first instalment of Frank Andrews and Ernie Bayly's Zonophone discography, but having had an opportunity to study the fruits of their labours, my feeling is that the wait has been well worthwhile. This volume focuses on the Zonophone record releases in the years between 1904, when the business was acquired by the Gramophone and Typewriter (later known as the Gramophone Company), and 1911, the year the marque merged with the equally successful mid-priced, double-sided Twin label. The book also includes an outline Zonophone history together with an informative text and index that includes priceless details concerning the pseudonyms artists were run under at different times.

The sheer complexity of the Zonophone output during the years covered by this work adds to the complications of reviewing. For, in sharp contrast to Frank Andrews and Ernie Bayly's other label listings, this volume covers records of differing sizes (Zonophone released records in five-, seven-, ten- and twelve-inch formats) and different series, including the ten-inch Zonophone Grand Opera records. To manage these factors, the authors have quite sensibly listed the records by using the catalogue number blocks rather than list by, say, original release dates or other forms of chronology.

The initial post-1904 Zonophone record releases were drawn from a variety of sources. Many were garnered from material originally found in the existing Zonophone catalogues, whilst others exploited the

Gramophone and Typewriter's by then extensive early seven-inch and later ten-inch black label back catalogues. This mixture reflected the twin purposes behind the 1904 purchase of Zonophone. Originally an American business, Zonophone first appeared in Europe in 1899 and provided the Gramophone and Typewriter with its earliest disc record competition. Its purchase therefore eliminated a troublesome competitor and at the same time gave the Gramophone and Typewriter a 'second string' label. This enabled it to break into the then burgeoning volume mid-price record business without compromising its existing black label and celebrity record catalogues. It was a clever move and it worked. For in the years after 1904, both in Britain and across Europe sales of the new product rocketed. This successful marketing strategy encouraged the business to record material exclusively for the Zonophone label. Eventually, other Gramophone Company subsidiary labels (The Twin and Cinch) were formed, and were sustained by exploiting what by then had become Zonophone's own extensive back catalogue.

Zonophone records were aimed at the musically unsophisticated skilled industrial working classes, and the records released on this marque reflect this. This listing contains pages of records featuring brass and military bands, then at the peak of their popularity. Although records were released using the bands' real names, there are also listings of records using a range of generic names.

Reflecting the music and the times, there are pages of religious music, hymns and so-called 'sacred music'. To me, the most interesting releases are those of popular music, whose release dates provide an unique pulse on what ordinary people were listening to at the time — I gave up counting how many versions there were of music from *The Merry Widow*. In addition, there are the records of some of the most important music hall performers of the day, including Harry Lauder, Mark Sheridan and George Robey. Among its pages are to be found familiar recording figures, such as Stanley Kirkby, Peter Dawson, Ernest Pike and many others. These are listed under their own and other names too numerous to mention in this review, but all faithfully recorded in the text and the index. Alas, there were no re-releases of the blue label 1902 Caruso Zonophones, but here are listed

the seven 1904 John McCormack records that found their way into the Zonophone catalogue under the name John O'Reilly.

The book's cover has an imaginative illustration of a contemporary advertisement, and the back and inside covers are cleverly illustrated with examples of the different labels the marque used during these years. Interleaved within the text are other illustrations, all of which makes this an attractive package. I congratulate Frank Andrews and Ernie Bayly for their meticulous scholarship and look forward with enthusiasm to volume two of the series. All serious record collectors need to have a copy of this book, and Christmas should simply have provided the excuse to buy one from the Society's booklist, price £24, plus post and packing.

Dr. Peter Martland

A World of Charm and Entertainment

is at the command of those who possess a Pathéphone—music the whole world has made, rendered by the world's finest Bands and Instrumentalists—songs sweet, grand and tender, sung by the great Vocalists—the humour of the world's best Minstrelmakers—is delivered perfectly through the

Pathéphone

To a unique degree the Pathéphone has the quality of reproducing the human voice and music of all kinds in full purity of tone and character. To listen—it is as if the Artists were there—in the room. The Pathéphone reproduces with a Permanent Pathé Sapphire Point.

No Needles to Change No Bother.

. . . Pathéphones are made in many styles, Hornless and otherwise, at prices ranging from 31/- to £42. Pathé Discs are the most moderate in price and last the longest. They are double-sided—two records on each. Prices: 10 in., 2/-; 11 in., 3/-; 14 in., 4/-

. . . Sold by Music Dealers throughout the U.K. In case of difficulty write us for Catalogues and Lists of Records, or call and hear special demonstrations of Pathéphone Models and Pathé Discs at:—

The Pathé Salon . . . 64, Regent St., London, W.

The Audio-Visual Archivist's Chronology

(reprinted from the IASA Information Bulletin of August 1999, with the kind permission of the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives)

1999 is the Centenary Year for the Vienna Phonogrammarchiv, and the 30th anniversary of the IASA. In celebration of 100 years of sound archives, the IASA has published an information bulletin in which is set out a Chronology of significant developments having an impact on the work of audiovisual archivists up to the present time. This chronology is also of interest to the Society as a context within which our own special concerns can be set. Indeed, the more recent developments appear to point to the future directions the recording industry will take. The IASA have kindly given us permission to reprint the Chronology, which we will

do over the next few issues of HILLANDALE NEWS.

Significant events in the Chronology are categorised in terms of their sphere of influence, viz., -

A Audiovisual

E Electronics/Computing/Internet

R Record/Broadcast industry.

Sources.

Raymond Gellatt: *The Fabulous Phonograph*.

Sir Alec Boers: *Innovation and Invention*; RSA Journal 3/4 1998 pp55-61.

The virtual gramophone <<http://www2.nlc-bnc.ca/gramophone/>>; Peter Copeland (BL NSA), Albrecht Haefner (SWF), Dietrich Schüller (Phonogrammarchiv).

YEAR	Cat.	EVENT
1820	E	Oersted discovers electromagnetism
1826	E	Ohm's law
1831	E	Michael Faraday discovers electromagnetic induction
1837	A	The World's first telegraph running in England
1857	A	The first documented recording of sound waves made by the phonograph, invented by Léon Scott de Martinville
1861	A	The first transmission of human voice on electrical wire, demonstrated by Philip Reiss
1876	A	The magnetic or reluctance microphone, patented by Alexander Graham Bell
1877	A	The invention of the cylindrical tin-foil phonograph by Thomas A. Edison. Charles Cros had earlier deposited with the Academie des Sciences a paper describing the process of recording and reproducing sound.
1878	A	Oberlin Smith, USA, develops magnetic tape recording in theory and experiment, and applies for a caveat.
1881	A	Clemens Ader, France, gets a patent for a stereophonic transmission equipment
1883	A	Paul Nipkow applies for a patent for a mechanically working TV equipment.
1887	A	Emile Berliner invents the etched, flat-disc Gramophon;

	A	Heinrich Hertz proves electromagnetism by experiment.
1888	A	Tainter and Bell invent the Graphophone. This included two new features: the recording medium was removeable and the groove was cut (reducing background noise). This invention led to the foundation of Columbia (see 1912).
	R	The first celebrity recordings made: Josef Hofmann and Hans von Bülow.
1889	A	The first commercial gramophones and gramophone records made by a toy factory in Germany.
1890	A	The first commercial cylinders go on sale.
	A	Dussaud, Switzerland, demonstrates an electrical pick-up as well as electrical disc recording.
1897	A	Shellac compound substituted for hard rubber as gramophone record material.
1898	A	Physicist Vladimir Poulsen invents apparatus (Telegraphon) for recording and reproducing sound magnetically on iron wire or ribbon for morse signals. Demonstrated 1900.
	E	J. J. Thompson discovers the electron.
	R	The Gramophone Company established in London, and factory erected in Hanover.
1902	R	The first Caruso arias recorded for The Gramophone Co. in Milan.
1904	R	Double-side recorded shellacs introduced (Odéon).
1907	E	Lee De Forest patents the triode vacuum valve (Audion tube) for audio amplification, which paves the way, e.g., for radio broadcasting.
1909	R	The first large-scale orchestral recordings issued by Odéon in England.
1910	R	The first radio broadcast – Caruso from the Metropolitan Opera. No public interest.
1912	A	Columbia discontinues the manufacture of cylinders.
1913	R	The first uncut symphonic recordings (Beethoven's 5 th) issued in Germany. Meanwhile the dance craze in America creates a new and very strong market for the phonographic industry.
1914-1918	A	Plastic recording tape coated with iron oxide is developed in Germany.
1920	A	Experimental electrical recordings are made by Guest and Merriman in Westminster Abbey during the burial service for the Unknown Warrior.
1922	R	The BBC commences broadcasting from London. The popularity of radio in the USA causes a decline in the phonographic industry.
1923	A	De Forest invents and demonstrates Phonofilm, precursor of film soundtracks.
	A	In Berlin, Vox starts production of tape recorders using steel tapes (the Marconi-Stille system).
1924	A	H. C. Harrison of Western Electric is granted a patent for electrical recording (preceded by several separate patents for components). Commercial applications began in 1925.
1925	A	78 rpm turntable speed adopted generally (but only standardised in the mid-1950s)
	A	Rice and Kellogg introduce a dynamic loudspeaker.
	A	Synchronous filming began (at Vitaphone).
		<i>to be continued...</i>

Report of the International Association of Sound & Audio-Visual Archives meeting in Vienna; 18th-25th September 1999

This year's meeting of IASA in Vienna celebrated not only the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the Vienna Phonogrammarchiv, but also IASA's 30th Annual Conference.

Well over 150 delegates attended, embracing virtually every country in the world, demonstrating a heart-warming homogeneity engendered by a community of interest. The keynote address was given by Rolf Schuurisma of the Netherlands, one of the founders of IASA and its first Secretary-General.

All the daytime sessions were held in halls of baroque splendour, while there seemed to be no evening that was not given over to partying – such as the reception given by the Mayor of Vienna at the Rathauskeller; a Phonogrammarchiv birthday celebration; and a farewell party at a period restaurant. At all these gatherings, Austrian hospitality and culinary and wine excellence, in abundance, was always to the fore.

Much serious work of academic excellence was not neglected, though, and certainly many who gave their presentations in English, even though it was not their first language, are to be commended in the highest terms.

Presentations included the future of sound and audio-visual archiving on the way to the third century; acknowledgment of the rôle of Franz Haböck in charting the history of the *castrati* singers; David Pickett's evaluation of the recordings of Gustav Mahler, with the latest recordings not always adjudged the best, while Jonathan Sternberg reminisced about the recording scene in the era of 'The

Third Man' immediately after the war, when Viennese musicians of the highest quality could be recruited for just a pittance. Comprehensive cover was given to the transfer and safeguarding of audio recordings to digital storage; Mike Biel from the USA featured the introduction of instantaneous/direct recording in the USA, while your correspondent demonstrated the high quality realisation of sound from cylinders of all sizes, speeds and formats. As ever, there was much information to be gleaned from informal chats between and after sessions with experts in their field.

No account of the Conference would be complete without mention of Dietrich Schüller, who not only contributed a presentation in impeccable English, but who, with his team, ran the Conference with all the smoothness of a Viennese *pâtisserie*.

Joe Pengelly

Postscript

Like nearly all English-speaking people at the Conference, we were ashamed that the rest of the world seem to have linguistic skills way beyond ours. So much so, that my offer of a translation was refused, with thanks, on the grounds that my presentation would be perfectly understood in English by everyone present. Even so, my joke about Europe no longer being cut off from England sank like a lead weight!

REPORTS

London; 21st September 1999

The Swedenborg Centre in Bloomsbury on Tuesday, 21st September saw another of the London Members' 'Hen's Teeth' nights. These are evenings that are left entirely up to Members to bring and display any unusual or interesting items from their collections.

First to the floor was Barry Raynaud with his interesting comparison of catalogue numbers, the same selection being given different numbers, or different selections with the same catalogue numbers. Barry played one of his records – 'Going Places', by Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang.

Dave Roberts brought along his Fireside model A phonograph and played a song 'Where Oh Where', which was credited to a singer named as Will Danby, a pseudonym of Peter Dawson. [See also letter on p.474 – Ed.] Although it was obviously not Dawson singing, the Members were unable to identify who the singer actually was. Dave then played two genuine Peter Dawson records, his first ever recording on an Edison Bell cylinder under the pseudonym of Len Dawson, and followed this by Dawson's final recording, from 1956.

Frank Andrews entertained us next with a Columbia recording of an excerpt from 'Don Pasquale', by Donizetti, followed by two cylinders, Master Lloyd Shakespeare, the 9-year old cornettist playing 'The Toreador – Bolero' on Clarion no. 256, and Frank C. Stanley singing 'A Dream' on an Indestructible Cylinder, no. 992.

Next to take the floor was the Chairman, Howard Martin, who had brought along some of his beloved Billy Williams records, and played a Jumbo recording of a selection of Billy Williams' choruses. Tom Little

displayed some of his collections of printed ephemera and souvenirs, including an HMV cigarette case, a bottle of HMV lubricating oil, and a record issued to commemorate the opening of the Tyne Bridge in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1928, with a speech by King George V.

Colin Armfield brought along what appeared to be a 'normal' single-sided disc, manufactured by Edison Bell, but it played from the centre, and was recorded at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm! Nobody could guess what it actually was until it was played, when it became obvious that it was the voice disc from a 'Speak Your Weight' machine, giving all intermediate weights from 1 to 20 stones. Geoff Edwards played an LP recording of an arrangement of Gustav Holst's 'The Planets – Suite' by Tomita, the unusual thing about the record being that it was withdrawn from sale almost immediately on release due to copyright problems with Holst's estate. Geoff also played a part of a documentary double album detailing the early years of pirate radio in the UK.

Barry Raynaud returned to show three different versions of a Charlie Kunz piano medley on Decca, Sterno and Rex, all numbered 'no. 1'; and a couple of fine groove 78s on the London and Esquire labels, giving about 4 minutes playing time per side. Barry closed by playing the first part from the first lesson of the Billy Mayerl Piano School course.

Ewan Langford played a recording of the, mostly improvised, central movement from Bach's 3rd Brandenburg Concerto, played on a viola dating from 1570. Ewan also pointed out that the same instrument is the one being played in the theme tune from the popular

UK television series 'Last of the Summer Wine'.

Tim Wood-Woolley brought some examples from his collection of unusually sized records, from 6" to 11³/₄". Also included was a moulded wax cylinder of only 3½ inches in length. There was no maker's name or artist embossed on the bevelled end, only the title of the selection. No one present was able to identify the manufacturer, although it was subsequently identified as being most likely an Excelsior record.

Timothy Massey played a recording of 'The Sweet Nightingale', sung by Freddie Hidgson, who was a male alto, then aged 93 years, and Howard Martin closed a most entertaining evening by playing Billy Williams singing 'I Didn't Know What To Do'.

Tim Wood-Woolley

London; 19th October 1999

On 19th October, the London Members gathered at the Swedenborg Centre to be entertained by John Passmore, with his programme entitled 'Twenties-Style Jazz'.

John, well-known to the London membership as a lover of great singing, revealed a hitherto unknown side of his character, that of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic *aficionado* of early-style jazz. The music he played dated from between 1917 and 1956, but the one thing all the pieces had in common was that they were all in what is identifiable as a 1920s style.

The recorded selections ranged from The Original Dixieland Jazz Band playing what is believed to be the first jazz record, 'Livery Stable Blues' on Victor from 1917 - a piece which must have been as shocking to its first listeners as punk-rock was in the 1970s - through King Oliver's Jazz Band with Louis Armstrong, then Bix

Beiderbecke and the great Bessie Smith to Chris Barber with Otilie Patterson, recorded in 1956. In between the established giants, we were entertained with some of the less well-known jazz bands, such as the California Ramblers on Edison Diamond Disc, McKenzie & Condon's Chicagoans on Parlophone, and Wingy Manone's Dixieland Band, recorded by Capitol in 1944.

In between the musical selections, John entertained us with many interesting facts which he had carefully researched regarding the lives, careers, and - mostly early - deaths of the jazz musicians.

All in all, this was a thoroughly enjoyable evening, and certainly an ear-opener for those of us who previously knew little about early jazz. John was enthusiastically thanked for his excellent programme in the usual manner.

Tim Wood-Woolley

The National Vintage Communications Fair, NEC, Birmingham; 24th October 1999

The Society had been granted a complimentary stand at this Autumn's Fair, which was manned by your Chairman, and one of the Editorial Team. The otherwise prosaic display material was enlivened by the presence of an oversize Nipper (on parole from Howard Hope's shop window display), which drew amused comments from many who passed by or attended the stand.

Sales of CLPGS material were modest, but significant, the principal benefit to the Society being that of exposure, the value of which is intangible, but very positive. It is to be hoped that the Society will be permitted to attend these twice yearly fairs on a similar basis in the future.

Editor

Midlands Group, Birmingham; 18th September 1999

A temporary change of venue has been forced on us by impending renovations at the room attached to the R. C. Cathedral: this meeting consequently took place at the neighbouring Salvation Army Building, by the kind cooperation of that organisation.

Our first speaker, Glyn Hughes, had given us a talk last year on 'A History of Welsh Artists on Acoustic Recordings'. This time his talk was entitled 'Early Welsh Singers and Their Pseudonyms'. He explained that his interest in early Welsh singers has led him deeply into the subject of tracing many of the artists who appeared under pseudonym. He suggested that it was the intention that record companies, with artists under contract, often issued their artists' records under pseudonyms to create the impression that the company had a vast array of talent to choose from. He circulated a list of artists and their known pseudonyms – at least three artists listed had seven pseudonyms each!

His records were played on the Society's Expert machine, in pairs, the correctly named artist followed by the same artist under pseudonym, so that comparisons could be made easily.

Glyn was prepared to admit that in some cases, the second record of each pair was only probably the same singer as the original, but invited the audience to give their opinions. Certainly, it was difficult at times to be sure, particularly when there was a gap of several years between recordings.

Examples that Glyn demonstrated included –

- ◇ **Madame Eleanor Jones Hudson** (soprano), on a 10" Gramophone Concert, no. GC 36663, of 1906 – 'The Sun Whose Rays' (The Mikado); the same performer as **Madame Deering** (soprano), on a 10" Zonophone, no. X 43148, of 1906 – 'Daddy'.

To confuse matters, the pseudonym 'Madame Deering' was sometimes applied to Miss Bessie Jones!

- ◇ **Mr. Tudor Davies** (tenor), on a 10" Scala, no. 480, of 1922 – 'Eileen Allannah'; the same performer as **H. Spencer Watts** (tenor), on a 10" Scala, no. 391, of 1922 – 'Omaha'.

Glyn's final example was of an original artist with two pseudonyms, the second of which was on a Pathé disc, and played on Glyn's own Pathé horn machine –

- ◇ **Mr. Evan Williams** (tenor), on a 10" HMV, no. 4-2181, of 1910 – 'A Perfect Day'; the same performer as **William T. Evans** (tenor), on a 10" Gramophone Concert, no. GC 3-2953, of 1908 – 'Love Me and the World is Mine'; and also the same performer as **William Evans**, on a 24cm Pathé, no. 78381, of 1911 – 'In the Valley Where the Bluebirds Sing'.

This well-researched programme certainly made us think of who recorded what, and where, and who was issued under pseudonym. Many thanks to Glyn for this highly enjoyable programme.

Our second speaker, Chairman Eddie Dunn, gave us a programme, again on 78s, entitled "Ladies of the Music Hall", our arranged speaker being unavailable. Eddie gave us records from 1904-1931, and artists included Florrie Forde, Vesta Victoria, Marie Lloyd, Ella Retford, Maidee Scott, Ella Shields, and Lily Morris. A less well-known artist, Dorrie Dene gave a very attractive rendering of 'I May be a Lady Tomorrow Morning', but it was probably Lily Morris who stole the show with her version of 'The Wives of Commercial Travellers'!

Eddie's programme was the ideal follow-up to Glyn's – once again we had two varied offerings which were greatly appreciated.

Geoff Howl

Midlands Group Annual Phonofair, Wolverhampton; 25th September 1999

This year's fair was judged by most stallholders to be another successful event, and for the visitors there was a bewildering array of talking machines, cylinder and disc records, catalogues and all manner of relevant accessories.

Stallholders came from all parts – Hereford, Shropshire, Northampton, East Anglia, South Wales, and Preston, to mention just a few. Likewise, Members arrived from all over, and enjoyed meeting old and new friends. The Society's AGM was held in a separate room from the fair at 2 p.m.

Once again, this venue proved ideal. The catering was first class and the parking easy. Members who do not attend this fair are missing out on a most enjoyable "gramophone" day.

Geoff Howl

Northern Group, Preston; 18th July 1999

It was Third Time Lucky, after two wet years, when we were blessed with a glorious day for our Annual Portable Picnic, which was held in the beautiful walled gardens of Alston Hall. The setting was perfect for the occasion, which was one of the most enjoyable meetings we have ever had.

Members were sat in a circle, and the machines were introduced in turn, with the Members describing, not only the machines, but also their choice of records.

The machines included a 99, a 101, and several 102 HMVs, several Columbia machines, a Swiss and a Japanese Mikiphone, a Decca, a Guiniphone, and a Puck phonograph, complete with its portable box and cylinders.

Members brought their own picnic lunches, with the liquid refreshments being supplied by the Alston Hall staff.

Ann Mallinson (Secretary)

West of England Group, 23rd. May 1999

Although the weather was not on our side, the West of England Group enjoyed the hospitality of Keith and Irene Badman's new bungalow for their second 'Portables Picnic'.

At about 3.00, the meeting started with some records as our lunches were eaten in the well-appointed lounge. Keith then welcomed us with 'Glorious Devon', as sung by Peter Dawson. Continuing the West Country flavour, Mark Spry gave us 'Old Devon by the Sea', by Hubert Eisdell. Next, our fortunes were told using a multi-track novelty record. (Being myself born under the star sign of Libra makes me naturally sceptical of all forms of fortune-telling.)

Ron Todd again amazed us with a wind-up novelty – a hand turned tape recorder used for African Missionary work, and Bernie Brown played 'Sunset Down in Somerset', by Charles Smart on the Christie Theatre Pipe Organ, from the Elite Cinema, Wimbledon.

We then heard 'Today I Feel So Happy' by the Hottentots, and 'We Shall Meet Again by the Seaside'. This latter was used as a plug for the Group's riverside cruise in September.

Mindful of the 'garden theme' we had originally chosen, Eric Whiteway entertained us with 'The Flowers That Bloom' (Pike & Kirkby), 'Tiptoe Through the Tulips' (Hylton Vocal Trio), and 'It's Only a Tiny Garden' (Sidney Coltham). Well, I suppose, compared to Whiteway's cider orchard, it was.

Tom Little took us to 'The Garden Where the Praties Grow' (McCormack), where we learnt all about 'Grecian Bends' (nothing to do with diving!). Joe Pengelly played three gobbets from his recently made CD. We were treated to 'In the Good Old Summer Time' on a Lambert Indestructible record, Ada Jones singing 'All Alone' on Edison Blue Amberol, and the Emperor of Abyssinia saying 'Phonograph'.

Finally, Bob Seymour took us back to nature with some of Ludwig Koch's songs of wild birds. Complete with the noises of rustling bushes, we heard the blackbird, woodpecker and cuckoo.

Mention should also be made of Irene's puddings – although we brought our own main courses, sweets were provided and enjoyed by all, especially the writer.

We all wish Keith and Irene much happiness in their new abode.

Paul Morris

West of England Group, Exminster, Devon; 18th September, 1999

On a day of gale warnings on the shipping forecast, and intorrential rain, around 14 'hardy, seafaring' Members and friends met for a musical boat trip on the Exeter Canal. (This is Britain's oldest canal, built in 1516 for the wool traffic.)

Fortunately, the boat was covered and had tables for our portable gramophones, which included Columbias, an HMV 101 (which had been to the bottom of another river!), a Pixie Grippa, and others. The records played were eclectic – from Caruso to Ronnie RONALDE, Herbert Payne (on 1906 Zonophone), and some peppy dance band items, including one announced by Jay Wilbur.

The boat landed us at the Turf Hotel, accessible only by water. Thus, we were completely marooned in the pub, with just

the barbecue, real ales, and the records to keep us going. The hotel staff, though welcoming us, were at first bemused by our weird music, but then decided that, although insane, we were harmless. Eager DJs kept 3 portables going in rapid succession. The music got jazzier, and the party – partier. This continued on the return boat journey, concluding a most enjoyable event, thanks to the organisation by Paul Morris.

Paul Collenette

REGIONAL GROUP SECRETARIES

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LETTERS

Folk Music

Having just returned to the fold after a three year hiatus I was pleasantly surprised to see so much coverage given to traditional folk music in the latest issue [no. 227, *Autumn 1999* – Ed.]. As this is, as they used to say on *Mastermind*, my specialist subject, perhaps I could make a few pertinent comments and observations.

In his report of the 15th June London meeting, *London Correspondent* describes the Edison Irish piece as 'cod'. If he means it in the conventional, disparaging, sense then he could not be more wrong. Patrick J. Scanlon was one of the key influential Irish melodeon players in the US, recording from 1917 on. The date of the two HMV pieces by William Kimber was 1st June 1948, not 1946. The 'Mr. Thomas', who recorded for Percy Grainger's cylinder machine, was actually 'Mr. Thompson'. 'Goldthorpe' is, according to Grainger's field notes, spelt 'Gouldthorpe'.

If anyone wants to follow this up, the Grainger material was issued in 1972 on a long deleted vinyl album, *Unto Brigg Fair* (Leader LEA 4050). The Kimber tracks are most accessible on a newly issued CD from the English Folk Dance and Song Society, *Absolutely Classic* (EFDSS CD 03). Scanlon, alas, has so far escaped the notice of reissue companies.

Keith Chandler;

South Leigh, Oxfordshire; OX8 6XN.

Record Collecting

I am provoked into responding to Mr. S. Miller's extraordinary letter published in issue no. 226 by his scathing attack on collectors of 78s. I must assume he was

serious in his condemnation of the medium that motivates me and, I like to think, the majority of CLPGS Members.

Of course, the carrying capability of the '78' cannot be compared to that of the CD, any more than it could be compared to the usefulness of the LP, or the compactness of tape. It didn't stand much chance against the continuous playing 8-track cartridge for that matter.

The attraction of 78 rpm discs is no more definable, I would suggest, than that of steam to railway enthusiasts, or acetylene to the Vintage Car Owners Club. It is a certain something that makes a hobby. That is what '78' record collecting is – a hobby. One that provides delight, frustration, the thrill of the chase, and a constant yearning to its devotees. We don't profess to be anything other than what we are. The preservation of socially historic artefacts is secondary to the main calling – that of ownership.

Whilst the value of old records may never rank alongside old coins or postage stamps, the street credibility of collectors will, I think, come to the fore, and there is many a presentation yet to come to a myriad of clubs and societies on the history of sound recording.

Anyone who collects anything should not feel obliged to justify that addiction. It comes from inside, part of their make-up. They – we – enjoy what we do, enjoy what we have and that should be sufficient. By all means be open and willing to share that interest if approached, but never feel that that interest is not interesting because it is too old.

Roger F. Swindall;

NORTHAMPTON; NN2 8TF.

What has the 78 to offer?

In reply to Steve Miller (issue no. 226, pp. 350/1) "What has the 78 to offer?" The answer is many thousands of fine performances which have never (yet) been reissued on LP or CD. Alas!

Michael P. Walters, MBOU;

[REDACTED]
RICHMOND, Surrey;
TW10 6JQ.

Turntable Felt

I was interested to see Nick Hiley's remarks about the restoration of portable machines and the regular appearance of green felt turntables on those he has seen restored. There were in fact a number of makes other than HMV, and not only portables that had genuine green felt turntables, including early Gramophone Company machines. Decca portables had green felt until they adopted the internal horns: from then they usually have blue velvet. Columbias have various shades of red turntables. Some of the fancier Gilbert portables have blue turntables (especially on blue machines!). Pixie Grippas, and the like had green felt, too.

I bought a beautiful black HMV 102 a couple of years ago. It only required cleaning and came up like new, except for the turntable mat which for some unknown reason had been torn off. In its place was a bright red felt square! Fortunately, the brown felt available today is very close to the colour found on 102s and later 101s and I was able to put this right. As I see it, the rule should always be *'Leave turntable felts alone unless they are in a terrible state or missing altogether.'*

Dave Cooper;

[REDACTED]
BLACKPOOL, Lancs.;

FY3 8HB.

Turntable Felt, and HMV Motors

Mr. Hiley asks (Autumn issue, p.407) why gramophone restorers put green felt on turntables. The answer is very simple: it's because green felt is what the makers used, up to the mid-1920s, when there was remarkably quick change. It all started, I think, with the new models introduced by Columbia in 1923. These had Garrard-built motors with a new kind of pressed steel turntable with a bevelled hollow rim. This enabled the edge of the plush with which these were covered to be tucked in. Plush, unlike felt, is a woven material and therefore liable to fray at the edges. Columbia went in for a bit of colour co-ordination, by using russet-red felt for mahogany models and a sort of khaki colour for oak ones.

In 1924, Hayes took note of this move away from green felt, and introduced brown felt – not plush, because their turntables still had square edges, and the new, beaded edge turntables that started to appear at about the same time, still offered no protection for fraying edges. Nor did they see any need to match the felt to the wood. (The purple felt Mr. Hiley claims to have seen on HMV was not original factory spec.)

The rapid spread of plush, in any colour other than green, to other makes no doubt had as much to do with the fact that many of them used Garrard motors as it had to fashion.

I enclose some snapshots of HMV motors, which are relevant both to this subject and to my Postscript to Dave Cooper's article on 101s [Issue no. 227, Autumn 1999, p.387]. Two show a section of the relevant turntable (both covered in brown felt), to show the change in rim type between the 100 and the 101. These two photos also show some of the differences between the original 400 motor and a later one from a front-wind 101.

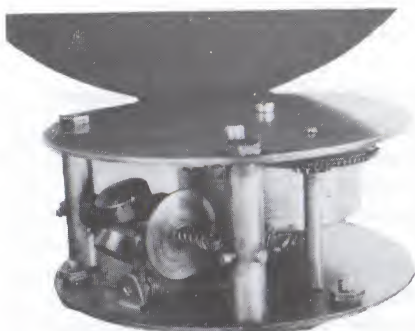


Figure 1. An original 400 motor (pictured inverted), from an HMV 100, showing part of turntable with brown felt to the edge.

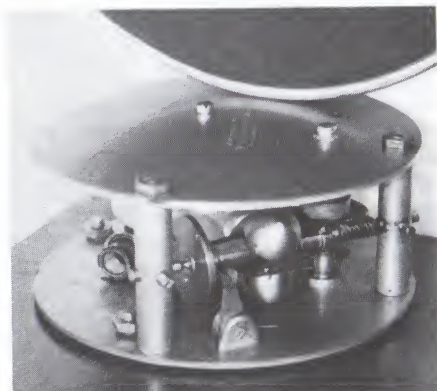


Figure 2. A later 400 motor (again pictured inverted), from a front-wind HMV 101, showing part of turntable with brown felt, this time up to the bevelled edge.

The governor weights and worm gear are different, as are the intermediate wheel and pinion (straight-cut gears on the 400, helical on the later one). Most obvious of all is the cut-out section on the bottom plate of the later motor, necessary to clear the 101's internal horn.

The third photo shows one of the 270 motors, from a 101N, and also shows the

distinctive, clamped (rather than laminated) motor-board.

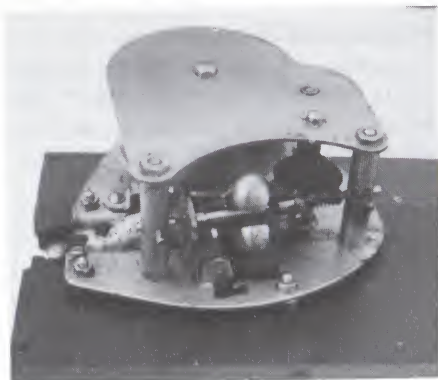


Figure 3. A 270 motor, from a later 101.

Christopher Proudfoot;
Christie's South Kensington, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] LONDON, SW7 3LD.

HMV Portables; and Soundboxes

I am finding Dave Cooper's series on HMV portables both fascinating and instructive. I look forward to many more instalments!

I own a brown crocodile 101 which seems to fall into category 'D' except that it has a 'style 3' catch and a 410 motor. There is no identity plate.

The turntable felt seems quite a dark brown to me, slightly darker than the painted interior of the horn, a feature Dave Cooper did not mention. He did mention cloth-covered motorboards, usual I think on coloured machines. On my machine, this feature is revealing. The motorboard had originally been covered in red leather, then overstock with crocodile, and both then drilled through to take the motor. This sort of "resourcefulness" in the factory would indeed make classification difficult!

In that regard, I wonder if the suffix letter system was used at all before about 1929, as the earliest machines displaying them from

the outset appear to be the 104 and the 130. If this is so, 101E, F, or G would be more or less an arbitrary starting point, after a great many earlier and uncoordinated changes.

I would also like to comment on Peter Heath's interesting article on Soundboxes. Firstly, his diagram of groove profiles surprises me. I had long understood that all the major recording companies had used a v-shaped groove from at least the mid-1920s. The purpose, I understood, was to ensure that any needle of the right size, however, poorly finished the tip, would make good contact with the sides of the groove. Is this true or not?

Secondly, looking at the frequency responses he has measured, I am struck by the very similar bass attenuations shown for each model, and I wonder if there is an independent cause. I trust that allowance was made for the recording characteristic of the test record (this is not stated), but what about the horn (sorry, tone chamber) of the 163? I guess most of us know that the bigger the horn, the bigger (if not better) the bass. Does the bass attenuation measured in fact represent the limitations of the 163? Is the treble also attenuated in part by the template from which the horn is made? It should be remembered that high frequencies were deliberately subdued to limit surface noise. Perhaps the above might explain why the response curves do not concur with HMV's claim for the No. 5 soundbox.

Martyn Dowell;

██████████ Hollybrook,
SOUTHAMPTON; SO16 6QY.

Response from Mr. Dave Cooper:

The details described in the above letter are of course, very interesting. Indeed, all coloured machines had motor-boards covered in leatherette or leather. In view of the fact that this machine had had at least part of the case covered twice suggests that

the factory were prepared to use up even case parts to meet orders or make up complete machines. It would make no sense to cover over expensive red leather otherwise. It might also explain why a darker brown felt turntable managed to find its way onto the machine (perhaps one originally destined for a black 101!) It is this apparent use of 'old' parts like this example that makes identifying versions or models of 101s so frustrating.

Response from Mr. Peter Heath:

1. Subsequent to your writer's comments, we have broken up two more records, one a Columbia, the other HMV, both from the late 20s or 30s. They were viewed at 100x magnification in cross-section, and appeared to be very similar to the Decca. It would be surprising if grooves were ever V-shaped, except perhaps in the earliest days. Needle tip pressure is very high, and the groove velocity at the outer edge of a 10-inch record is about 40 inches per second. The soundbox weight, has to be properly supported.

2. It may be true that high frequencies were subdued in order to limit surface noise, but the real limitation is in the record itself. The inner grooves run at about 18 inches per second, and at 4500 Hz., one cycle would occupy 0.004 inches – the same as the needle tip diameter!

The bass attenuation measured represents the limitation of all acoustic gramophones. At around 200 Hz., the dominant force in the moving system is due to diaphragm stiffness, and a high proportion of the transferred energy is lost in reacting on the soundbox and tone arm masses. This cannot be compensated for by the record because there simply is not enough space between the grooves to supply a greater deflection to the diaphragm.

No allowance was made for the recording characteristic of the test record, but each test

was carried out under exactly identical conditions in a sealed room with no audible extraneous noise.

I have no detailed knowledge of horn characteristics, whether made of wood, metal or *papier-maché*. The basic rule must be – Energy In is equal to Energy Out less Losses. There is no amplification.

Help Wanted: Will Danby – Who Is He?

Anybody who has taken an interest in Peter Dawson will be aware that he recorded under several different names during his early career. Among the names used according to his autobiography are Will Strong and Frank Danby. Various researchers have added the name Will Danby to the list of pseudonyms and I was not knowledgeable enough to question their authority.

I came across a 'White' cylinder some time ago with the name Will Danby, and assuming it was a Dawson cylinder I took it home. When I eventually played it, it was more like Billy Williams with his patter and mannerisms than Dawson, so I lent it to our Billy Williams expert, Howard Martin, who assured me it certainly was not he. So I tried our London meeting audience recently [*see report of 21st. September meeting, this issue – Ed.*] to no avail. Nobody could put a name to the voice. Perhaps the name on the cylinder is the artist's true name and not a pseudonym after all. If anybody does have a Will Danby recording on cylinder or disc, perhaps they would like to listen to it again, and tell me who the voice really belongs to.

The cylinder I have is 'Where Oh Where', White Record 172.

Dave Roberts.

Help Wanted – Francis Barraud's 'His Master's Voice' picture

Some years ago, I purchased a reproduction of the 'His Master's Voice' picture painted by Francis Barraud. This I obtained through the Society. Do you know where I might buy several copies. They were 24" x 18" approximately.

Manoli Coulentianos; [REDACTED]
ISANDO, 1600; SOUTH AFRICA.

E-mail: <[REDACTED]>

Chairman's Forum

Many years ago, my address was regularly published in the magazine and on the booklist. When I published catalogues, I stated that the address was for mail order only, and no callers would be welcome. This did not deter some visitors calling, uninvited, and invariably at most inconvenient times, to buy books. It is for this reason that I would not like to see the Membership List available to all. If a Member wants to contact others in his area, he only has to write to the magazine and ask them to write to him, and a meeting or correspondence can continue, if desired.

I also do not agree with the policy of publishing a letter writer's full address in the magazine. This should be no more than the person's name, followed by the town name.

Mr. D. R. Roberts

NEWS FROM THE CLPGS BOOKSHOP

George Woolford; [REDACTED] WELLS-
NEXT-THE-SEA, Norfolk; NR23 1RD.

Telephone and fax.: [REDACTED]

May I thank all those Society Members who have supported the Bookshop during the last year. We are into another era with cylinders, discs and the machines they play on, becoming 'antiques'. Please continue encouraging sales. I propose to publish Frank Andrews' listing of the 12" Parlophone 'E' series, which has been typed into the computer by Michael Smith. Ernie Bayly has also offered us his endeavours of the 10" HMV 'B' series. Details of costings and publication dates to follow.

There are very limited supplies, now, of 'Tinfoil to Stereo' and 'Fascinating Rhythm'. Stocks of ref.: BD-03 'Phonographics' and CL-25 'The HMV 1930 Machine Catalogue' have now been exhausted. We are still awaiting stocks of 'Columbia Phonograph Companion, volume 1', at the time of writing [end of November]. I still have no notification that these books have been despatched. I have a private printing of the 'Jumbo' listing as compiled by Frank Andrews and Ernie Bayly. These are a second and corrected edition, available for £6 per copy. Members with the first edition may obtain the corrections and omissions by sending me three second class stamps (or 40p + postage if ordered along with other items).

Frank Andrews has requested that I point out two numerical discrepancies in the item CL-35 'Columbia Up-dates' - nos. 1048, 1051 and 3331, should actually be 1148, 1151 and 3330 - all as originally listed in the main publication.

I now have stocks of BD-36 'Edison Blue Amberol Records', 1912-1914, by Ronald Dethlefsen @ £25-00 per copy plus postage; together with 'Edison Blue Amberol Records' 1915-1929. This is a giant paperback of 504 pages, in the same vein, with reprints in monochrome of contemporary advertisements, record catalogue and supplements, cylinder box slips, portraits of artists, machines, and

accessories. Cost is £50-00 plus postage, reference no.: BD-45.

There are some limited stocks of a c.1911 HMV Machine catalogue, which is an elderly Society publication from the mid-1980s. With cream-coloured paper covers and blue friezes of Nipper trade marks, it contains 32 monochrome pages of machines commencing with the Chippendale Auxetophone @ £125, and concluding with Mahogany horns @ £3. Issued as item CL-36, cost of £3 per copy plus postage.

HMV Gramophones 1921 to 1936 is a compilation by Barry Williamson, an A5 size paperback of some 158 pages. The Index lists some 190 models issued by that Company, within those years. All the monochrome illustrations are taken from contemporary literature, so are identifiable, as opposed to photographs. The quality is good enough to recognise the various fittings, trade marks and winding handles, etc. There are also illustrations of the accessories available, together with needle containers, albums and lubricants. Issued as item CL-37, cost of £8-00 per copy plus postage.

DATE ABOUT ALL THOSE ENGLISH 78s - Pt. 1 - Commercial - Eddie Shaw. Reprinted due to demand, this lexicon lists all of the commonly encountered companies, pinpointing often very accurately exactly when the recording was made. 78 pages of text plus an introduction. Issued in A4 format with clear plastic covers and slide spine binding. This is issued as item CL-26, cost of £7-50 per copy plus postage.

BEKA Double Sided Records - a listing dating probably from just before the Great War, and including the newly introduced "12" Meister Records". Many quality Band, Orchestral, Instrumental and Vocal records are listed including many Music Hall artists, some of which

are illustrated. Issued as item **CL-31, cost of £3-00 per copy plus postage.**

SOCIETA ITALIANA di FONOTIPIA – reproduction of an original 12½" x 7½" catalogue with red borders, dated 1907. Lavish production featuring Operatic, Speech and Instrumental artists who recorded for the Fonotopia label. Biographical text in Italian, large photographs and listings of recordings available. Issued as item **BD-42, cost of £12-00 per copy plus postage.**

COLUMBIA 10" RECORDS – Frank Andrews. Re-print for 1999. The original 300-odd pages of information are augmented with a further 22 pages of corrections, bound in. Coloured laminated thin card covers and taped spine. Issued as item **BD-28, cost of £28-00 per copy plus postage.**

COLUMBIA 10" RECORDS UPDATE. The 22-page update is published separately for Society Members who have already purchased the publication BD-28. Presented in a clear A4 plastic folder, suitable for either slipping into the book or transferring the information over into the text, as required. Issued as item **CL-31, cost of £2-50 per copy plus postage.**

IMPERIAL RECORDS 1929. A wonderful miscellany of Popular and Classical titles drawn from diverse British, American and Continental sources. Issued as item **CL-32, cost of £2-00 per copy plus postage.**

CATALOGUE OF EDISON 4-MINUTE WAX AMBEROL CYLINDER RECORDS. Volume 2 – British Issues, 1909-1912. Second (revised) Edition 1974. Copies of the original publication compiled by the late Sydney Carter. Issued as **CL-33, cost of £3-00 per copy plus postage.**

Re-print of Record Lists for BERLINER DISCS. British issues for Nov. 16th 1898, Feb. 22nd 1899 and June 1900, single German and French lists + American for Feb. 22nd 1899. Issued as item **CL-34, cost of £2-00 per copy plus postage.**

ZONOPHONE RECORDS – Frank Andrews. The definitive list of all the single-faced records issued by this company in the 5", 7", 10" and 12" sizes. Listing not only the earlier

Prescott discs which were initially carried prior to takeover, then numerically all sections of vocal, instrumental and band/orchestral. Also additional Hebrew, French, German and Italian language sections. Comprehensive index with additional contemporary illustrations taken from the 'Sound Wave'. With the kind assistance of EMI, we have been given permission to illustrate in colour some 14 variations of labels, many examples actually from their archive, used during this period. Issued in A4 size, 184 pages of text, soft laminated coloured cover. Publication distributed after 25th June 1999. Issued as item **BD-44, cost of £24 per copy plus postage.**

ANTIQUE PHONOGRAPH Gadgets, Gizmos & Gimmicks – Fabrizio & Paul. 228 pages of text and coloured photographs; hardback 9" x 11¼" with coloured dust jacket. Companion book to the "Talking Machines". See review by Joe Pengelly in HILLANDALE NEWS no. 226, Summer 1999, p.342 for further details. Issued as item **BD-45, cost of £39-95 per copy, plus postage.**

Finally, many correspondents inquire about our postage rates, which remain as stated on our order forms. These are as follows.

Items ordered within the U.K., with a value up to £5, need an additional 50p for postage; and up to £10, need an additional £1 for postage. Orders in excess of this amount, please include 10% in addition to the total.

Overseas Members need to add 15% to the total of their orders (unless the amount is less than £1, in which case please also add an additional £1 for postage).

I always send books by the cheapest route (which is also the slowest). For Overseas Members, in the future, I will publish an Air Mail Rate on all our stock, but the costs are disproportionately high.

A happy and good New Year and Century to you all.

George Woolford

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

The following information has been supplied to the Editors regarding Events of interest to Members, organised by other parties. It is supplied here in good faith for the benefit of Members and other readers, but the Society and its agents take no responsibility for any inaccuracies or omissions.

JANUARY 2000 - No dates

FEBRUARY 2000 - Sunday 6th - Wimbledon Record Fair
Wednesday 9th - Mechanical Music Sale, Phillips, Knowle,
West Midlands

MARCH 2000 - Sunday 5th - Record Fair, Motor Cycle Museum, Meriden,
West Midlands
Sunday 26th - Vintage Technology 2000 Fair, De Vere
Hotel, Blackpool

APRIL 2000 - Sunday 2nd - Wimbledon Record Fair
Thursday 6th - Mechanical Music Sale, Christie's, London
Sunday 16th - Croydon Record Fair
Sunday 30th - National Vintage Communications Fair,
National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham

MAY 2000 - No dates

JUNE 2000 - Sunday 18th - Record Fair, Motor Cycle Museum, Meriden,
West Midlands

JULY 2000 - Sunday 2nd - Wimbledon Record Fair
Thursday 27th - Mechanical Music Sale, Christie's, London

AUGUST 2000 - No dates

SEPT. 2000 - Sunday 3rd - Wimbledon Record Fair
Sunday 10th - Vintage Technology 2000 Fair, De Vere
Hotel, Blackpool
Sunday 17th - Croydon Record Fair

OCTOBER 2000 - Sunday 15th - Record Fair, Motor Cycle Museum, Meriden

NOV. 2000 - Sunday 19th - Wimbledon Record Fair

DEC. 2000 - Thursday 14th - Mechanical Music Sale, Christie's, London

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